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**Reducing youth advantage through ‘Education for Enterprise’:
The case of Ngā Kākano School¹**

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ABSTRACT

In developed countries, the education divide between students with access and those without access to elite education providers has deepened. Students who have limited access to ‘elite’ education are at risk of joining a vicious circle of low educational outcomes, and displaying behaviours that make escape from poverty difficult. The case study details the journey of a high school that embarked on a path to engage all of its students in 'Education for Enterprise' (E4E) as a curriculum foundation to help its students achieve educational outcomes that better position them for modern citizenship and promising career pathways. The strategic change implemented by the school was informed by strategic audit and idealised design, but ultimately was pursued in an enterprising and opportunistic fashion. A distinctive teaching and learning environment is emerging combining indigenous (Māori), Western, and contemporary pedagogies: *Te Kaupapa Ngā Kākano*.

Key words: Youth enterprise, indigenous enterprise, indigenous education, education for enterprise, case study

INTRODUCTION

In developed countries, the education divide between students with access and those without access to elite education providers has deepened. Students who have limited access to ‘elite’ education are at risk of joining a vicious circle of low educational outcomes, inadequate and inappropriate training for the emerging workplace, and behaviours that make escape from poverty difficult (Boven, Harland and Grace, 2011). This case study explores the lessons learned from a school that has embarked on a path to engage all of its students in 'Education for Enterprise' (E4E) as a curriculum foundation to help its students aspire and achieve educational outcomes that better position them for modern citizenship, tertiary education, or other promising career pathways.

BACKGROUND LITERATURE

Ngā Kākano Christian Reo Rua Kura [Literally ‘Seeds of the creator bilingual school’] is a private school based in Auckland, New Zealand, founded in 1997 by Te Rangi Allen and his wife, Veronica

Allen. Their vision for Ngā Kākano was ignited by Te Rangi's sadness at the high truancy and low success rate of Māori and Pacific Island students he saw in his then role as a 1st XV rugby coach at a secondary school in west Auckland. The school first operated as a childcare centre for 16 children and was strongly *whānau* [family] oriented. A collaboration with Waikato University's 'Transition to *kura*' [place of learning] programme highlighted key areas of success. By 1998 the school gained registration as an Area School (ages 5 through 18). The school's mission evolved to 'develop, equip and empower students of tomorrow', focused particularly on education tailored to improve Māori and Pacific Island students' success rates in education (Vause, 2011).

By 2011, Ngā Kākano was operating from a basic light industrial building with a roll of 64 students from Year 1 through Year 13 (ages 5 through 17). Capital funding came primarily from the New Zealand Ministry of Education (80 per cent), with the remainder from parents, donations, and foundation grants. However, less than 15 per cent of the school's operating budget came from the Ministry of Education. The school survived on modest fees paid by parents, careful, innovative management, and modest salaries drawn by the principal and teachers.

In 2011, the school had ambitions to increase its roll to 250 students, establish itself in purpose-built buildings, and broaden its curriculum to include specialist programmes in Māori language, Māori culture, and business. The challenge was to acquire the financial and human resources needed to bring these ambitions to fruition in the face of several strategic issues detailed later.

In October 2011, a team of business entrepreneurship students from Unitec Institute of Technology (Unitec), under the leadership of Vause, presented an interactive workshop introducing pupils at Ngā Kākano to the principles of business entrepreneurship, finance, and law. The highly interactive workshop engaged the school pupils to such an extent that the Principal (Te Rangi Allen), invited Mellalieu and his then student Vause to explore how business education could be introduced into Ngā Kākano's educational programme. The paper continues by providing a case example of how this particular initiative was interwoven with Ngā Kākano's overall strategic development challenges. In particular, the case provides a snapshot of how several strategic issues challenging Ngā Kākano in

2011 were partly resolved through several initiatives introduced through to early 2014.

METHODOLOGY

In 2011 a series of stakeholder meetings with students, staff, and family confirmed the identification of several strategic issues, detailed later, that challenged the school. The process, somewhat emergent, was informed by both traditional Māori protocol (several *hui*, that is, consensus-focused meetings), and strategic change processes including Strategic Audit (Mellalieu, 1992) and Idealised Design (Ackoff, 1978). Especially pertinent as a relevant, pragmatic foundation from the literature was the exemplary case of the Idealised (re)Design of the Academy of Vocal Arts, Philadelphia (AVA) (Pourdehnad and Hebb, 2002; Magidson, 2006; Ackoff, Magidson and Addison, 2006).

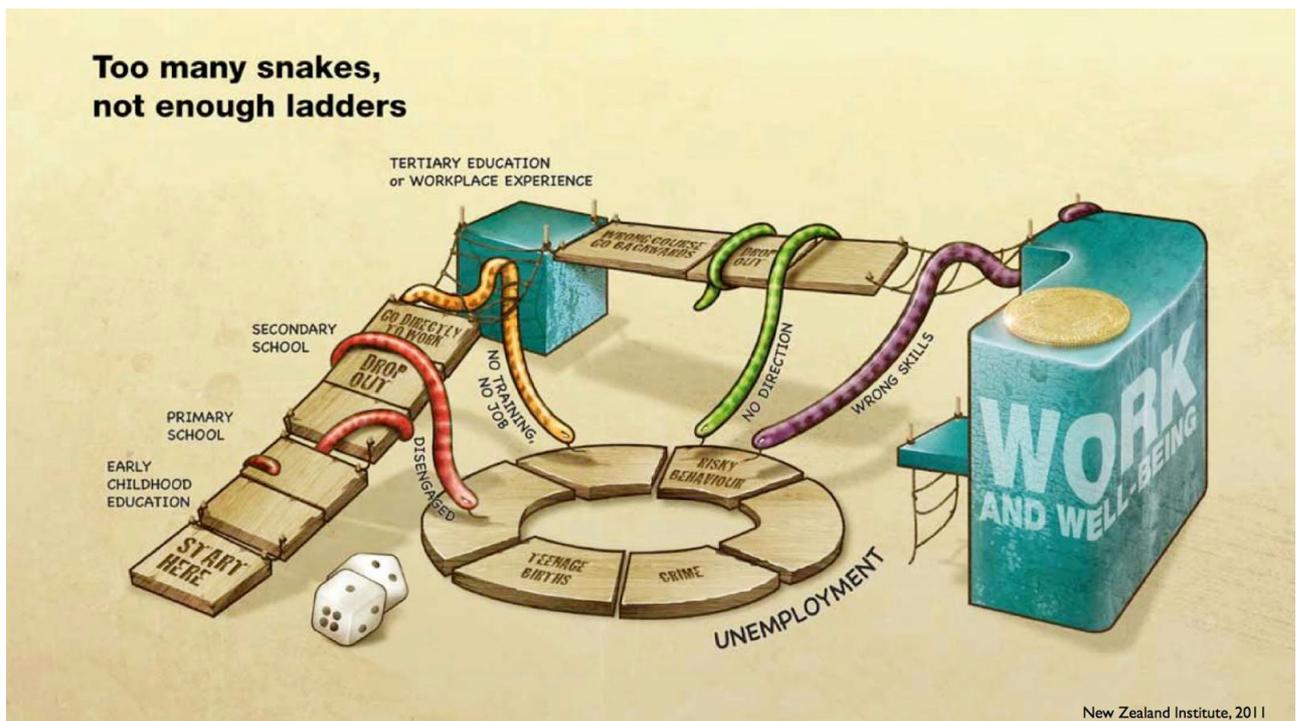
Furthermore, the school's constituency realised the need to develop a hybrid school curriculum, pedagogy, and learning environment that drew on traditional Māori pedagogical practices [*kaupapa Māori*] and the students' educational needs for developing opportunities to thrive in the contemporary, 21st century world. This realisation was informed by a paper by Boven, Harland, and Grace (2011), an illustration from which is presented in Figure 1. Boven et al's figure encapsulates the notion that to achieve well-being and productive employment, the journey from childhood is fraught with risks (snakes). The risks to a young child include losing engagement with the education process, thereby dropping out, or learning the wrong skills for which there are no jobs. These risks were more likely to face students from relatively disadvantaged backgrounds, and this gave rise to Boven et al's notion of an 'education divide'.

Once the strategic issues were clarified and confirmed by the constituency, the school pursued a series of opportunistic and enterprising initiatives aimed at resolving the issues.

Data for the paper is derived from several sources including documents, audio-video recordings, and participant observation and reflection. The documents included: operational and strategic reports prepared for the Board of Trustees of Nga Kakano; documentation provided to and from the Ministry of Education pertaining to performance evaluation and accreditation; and documentation related to the school's applications for Partnership School status and funding. As

participant observers all authors contributed to analysing and reflecting on the data and observations. Vause was a multi-faceted participant taking roles as a student at Unitec, a school administrator at Nga Kakano, a member of the school's founding Allen family, an Executive Board member, and, ultimately, lead teacher for E4E in the school. Kearns, formerly a secondary school teacher who had contributed to the establishment of the New Zealand E4E curriculum, played a particular role in advising, and adapting the E4E curriculum for Nga Kakano. Coleman, a Unitec graduate of business innovation and entrepreneurship, contributed as both a mentor to the student E4E Young Enterprise teams and advisor to the Nga Kakano Board. Mellalieu's role evolved from that of Unitec strategic and academic facilitator, informed by Ackoff's Idealised Design approach, towards being appointed to the Board of Nga Kakano.

Figure 1: ‘Too many snakes, not enough ladders’ result in disengaged, incorrectly educated youth with poor employment prospects



Source: Boven, Harland, and Grace, 2011.

The paper here is written primarily as a case note to reveal the authors' joint agreement about 'what happened' with the intention of subjecting the case to critical and theoretical scrutiny at a later point. The paper proceeds by introducing the issues as they were in 2011, explains how the Education for Enterprise initiative was implemented, and updates the strategic issues as they had unfolded by 2014. The paper concludes with lessons learned from introducing the E4E initiative within the context of the school and its broader strategic development challenges.

RESULTS AND IMPLICATIONS

In October 2011, Mellalieu and Vause, in a quick, preliminary assessment, identified the top five strategic issues facing Ngā Kākano as a prelude to identifying the context for embedding Education for Enterprise into the school. The issues were the need to:

ISSUE 1: Broaden the funding base for a school with 'special character';

ISSUE 2: Develop a suitable physical location to cater for expansion in the student roll;

ISSUE 3: Embed Education for Enterprise (E4E) across the curriculum;

ISSUE 4: Acquire specialist staff who can harmonise with the school's special character;

ISSUE 5: Develop a portfolio of pedagogies and learning technologies appropriate for guiding students to future success in a post-modern, post-colonial world.

The following paragraphs elaborate the issues as they were characterised in 2011 as a basis for future strategic choice and development (Mellalieu and Vause, 2011). Later in the paper, these issues are updated to reflect the school's situation in early 2014.

ISSUE 1: Broaden the funding base for a school with 'special character'

In 2011, the school ran a tight budget with a balance sheet that provided limited support for investments in quality improvements, development, and growth. The school was funded through a modest level of school fees charged to parents. As a private school, the school received around 10 to

15 per cent of its costs from public education funds. However, the school had a ‘special character’ in terms of its focus on a ‘low-decile’ Māori/Pacifika demographic and Christian values. Given its superior educational achievements for its targeted demographic there were likely to be several opportunities to gain public sector, private sector, and philanthropic cash and non-cash contributions to support the school’s development. One important source was public sector funding from New Zealand’s Vote: Ministry of Education for Schools of Special Character such as the existing practice for Catholic private schools. This source could provide substantial funding towards a new building, equipment, and staffing costs. The challenge was to prepare the documentation necessary to support applications to these additional sources of funding.

ISSUE 2: Develop a suitable physical location to cater for expansion in the student roll

In 2011, the school was located within a light industrial manufacturing/service building complex. The space available limited growth from the 2011 roll of 60 students, although the construction of a mezzanine floor was feasible. However, space was available in nearby units for rental. The current space was a pragmatic, cost-effective solution for the school, but was less satisfactory as a long-term ‘home’ for the school. The location was near to a park where outdoor recreational activities could be conducted. Also nearby was Henderson’s Lincoln Road business district that included light industrial, service, retail, and hospital facilities. The 2011 financial situation of the school inhibited the jump to the next stage of growth.

ISSUE 3: Embed education for enterprise across the curriculum

Education for Enterprise (E4E) offered students feasible, alternative pathways to a ‘good job’ (Clifton, 2011) beyond traditional secondary school educational pathways focused on training for a technical trade or for professional/tertiary education. A three-hour pilot teaching module lead by business students (including Vause, then a student) of Unitec Institute of Technology achieved considerable engagement by many students in the Senior Class of the school. (The Senior Class was a mixed class

combining students aged 13 through 18 years.) This positive engagement encouraged the Principal (Te Rangi Allen) and School Administrator/Project Manager (Vause) to begin exploring how to embed education for business and enterprise (E4E) into the senior school curriculum. Consequently, the school became committed to learning and adapting lessons from E4E schemes such as Onehunga High Business School, the Young Enterprise Scheme (YES), and Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE). Coincidentally, a new national curriculum for business enterprise education was being rolled out through secondary schools in New Zealand. Several staff at Unitec Institute of Technology's business school were willing and able to support the school's adoption of E4E through its teaching and applied research programmes in E4E (That is, Kearns and Mellalieu).

ISSUE 4: Acquire specialist staff who can harmonise with the school's special character

The school employed several general purpose educators and teaching assistants highly committed to the special character and values of the school. These educators were committed teachers giving time and effort far beyond the normal call of duty. However, there was an urgent need to enhance the existing capacity for Māori language teaching and develop new areas such as Education for Enterprise (E4E). The challenge was to devise arrangements to employ full and part-time people who could contribute specialist teaching whilst also contributing to the development of the school's special character.

ISSUE 5: Develop a portfolio of pedagogies and learning technologies appropriate for guiding students to future success in a post-modern, post-colonial world

The school in 2011 utilised a paper-based self-teaching system based on a US curriculum system, Accelerated Christian Education (ACE). The system was cost effective and simple to implement given the wide age range and capabilities of students in the Senior Class. Furthermore, the ACE curriculum enabled students to gain qualifications necessary to enter university. However, resources for learning and teaching were becoming increasingly powerful, interactive, and engaging through the application

of digital computing and communications technologies. Furthermore, the work-place increasingly required its employees to be ‘digitally literate’ in terms of using information technologies to plan and coordinate activities with others. The performance:cost ratio of information technology was continuing to improve. However, leaping onto the ‘treadmill’ of technology-enhanced learning presented challenges for the school in terms of maintaining the currency of technology. What were the best technology adoption pathways for the emerging cloud-oriented post-personal computer world of digital technologies?

Developments November 2011 through March 2012

In early November 2011, the foregoing strategic issues were presented as part of a community meeting (*hui*) with stakeholders of the school: *whānau* [parents and extended family], senior students, and teachers. A video presenting brief highlights of the earlier October workshop (Issue 3) with the Ngā Kākano students demonstrated their engagement with both the topic of business, and its mode of teaching. The video seemed particularly influential in gaining strong support from the parents to consider adopting an Education for Enterprise programme into the school’s curriculum. Boven et al’s figure (Figure 1) was also used as part of the presentation by the authors to the community.

Kearns outlined alternative approaches to introducing E4E. Kearns in his earlier career as a secondary school teacher, had been a key driver in the development of the E4E curriculum for New Zealand’s secondary schools. One alternative Kearns suggested was to use the long-established Lion Foundation Young Enterprise Scheme (YES) as a vehicle for providing a highly-experiential approach to delivering E4E. Over the next few weeks, this recommendation was adopted.

The engagement of *whānau* and their unanimous and wholehearted approval to implement E4E is considered a critical milestone. Within Māori culture nothing can proceed smoothly without full discussion leading to a consensus decision from the *whānau*. This was the first ‘win’ in the journey towards successful implementation of E4E in Ngā Kākano.

By December, Vause and several other Ngā Kākano parents had attended an induction

programme for introducing the Young Enterprise Scheme within the school. A distinctive, relatively unusual, feature of the implementation at Ngā Kākano was the decision that all Senior School students would take part (from age approximately 14 through 17). A second feature proposed was that two half-days per week would be devoted to the students participating in the planning of their YES business enterprises and related E4E curriculum. By contrast, the usual implementation for YES in schools is through optional, extra-curricular activity for the most senior students, aged 16-17 years.

Over the long New Zealand summer break (mid-December through late-January 2012), Ngā Kākano opportunistically relocated to larger, more appropriate premises located directly adjacent to public sports grounds. Some groundwork for establishing the school's YES teams had also begun, at the recommendation of Kearns, so that the pupils could spend their summer generating ideas for possible company businesses.

The students' excitement and level of engagement in E4E was so high that they spent their Christmas holidays considering possible ventures. This was a second 'win' in the successful implementation of E4E in Ngā Kākano. As with *whānau* engagement and approval, student buy-in was equally critical, if not more so.

By March 2012, the Ngā Kākano pupils had formed two loosely-coupled companies under the YES programme, Rangatahi Productions and Ngā Puawaitanga. One business was focused on providing a Māori cultural experience to new immigrants and tourists. The second business was purposed to write and record songs for performance by the first company. These foci were to change, adapt and evolve throughout the year, with the end result winning the teams many awards.

In Mid-March a large meeting for about two dozen YES school companies based in West Auckland was held at the Henderson Trusts Stadium. This event was organised and facilitated by Auckland Tourism, Events and Economic Development (ATEED), a city council organisation. At this event, a 'speed coaching' method was used whereby an assortment of business mentors and Unitec business teachers critiqued constructively each of the companies' emerging business venture proposals. Rather pleasingly, the companies from Ngā Kākano appeared amongst the more advanced

school companies in that they had a presentable business plan, interviewed well, and were the only team to arrive with business cards.... A few days earlier the Ngā Kākano companies had been primed about the crucial importance of networking as part of a guest workshop from one of the Unitec staff. The Ngā Kākano companies completed the day with a sense of confidence that their progress and effort was both appropriate and recognised as worthy.

By the conclusion of 2012, Ngā Kākano had launched successfully an Education for Enterprise programme into its curriculum. The new school premises was more attractive, spacious, and functional. The additional space enabled the school to split its students into three classes from its earlier two classes: Junior, Middle, and Senior School. A gift of end-of-life personal computers to the school provided for the possibility of addressing some aspects of introducing modern information technology for education.

Following the late November 2011 re-election of a National (conservative) government, education and skills development for New Zealand's long-tail of 'disadvantaged' young people became rated a high priority for government policy. Furthermore, the adaption to New Zealand of the US Charter School public:private partnership model emerged as an new, alternative funding opportunity for Ngā Kākano (Parata & Banks, 2012; Anon, Partnership Schools). Nevertheless, Ngā Kākano still needed to address the issue of broadening its funding base.

Beyond Kearns and Mellalieu, additional teaching staff at Unitec began to take note of the value of the Ngā Kākano initiative and offered their support as mentors to the school, and the YES programme generally. Over the period May through June senior pupils from Ngā Kākano visited and participated in 'try it for a day' classes in the Unitec business school with the prospect that they might consider advancing their studies of business in the tertiary education sector. Anticipating how the Ngā Kākano approach might be up-scaled to other schools became a matter for development by Unitec's Department of Management and Marketing.

In 2013, Ngā Kākano continued the E4E initiatives introduced in 2012. Three YES teams participated in the regional competitions. Furthermore, the school developed and submitted its

application for operation as a Partnership School, the New Zealand ‘brand-name’ for the US Charter School movement.

Ngā Kākano in 2014

Reflecting on the strategic issues identified in late 2011, the situation for Ngā Kākano at the commencement of the new school in early 2014, had evolved as follows:

ISSUE 1: Broaden the funding base for a school with ‘special character

By mid 2013, Ngā Kākano had been shortlisted for funding as one of a limited number of pilot schools for the government’s new Partnership Schools programme. This programme was informed by the increasing evidence of success by the United States Charter Schools movement (The Economist, 2012; M. D. S., 2013). Whilst Ngā Kākano was unsuccessful in achieving Partnership Schools funding commencing for the 2014 academic year, the process of undergoing scrutiny for its application had developed deepening support from an extensive Māori community for the school to gain Partnership status from the then forthcoming (2015) negotiation process. More recently, the school was being recognised by a small, but growing number of educationalists as having developed a unique, distinguished, and ultimately successful teaching and learning environment particularly helpful for advancing disadvantaged Māori and Pacifica children - that is, what was becoming termed ‘*Te Kaupapa Ngā Kākano*’.

ISSUE 2: Develop a suitable physical location to cater for expansion in the student roll

The school has twice moved location since 2011 from its less satisfactory light industrial factory warehouse location. Most recently, in 2013 the school took occupancy of a modern, purpose-built, small-scale educational facility. Whilst the lease on the facility is heavily subsidised, the location provided ample scope for development and growth. Continued, long-term access to the facility may well be contingent on resolution of ISSUE 1. Fortunately, the school was making more obvious and productive use of the facility than its previous occupants.

ISSUE 3: Embed Education for Enterprise (E4E) across the curriculum

Since 2012, Ngā Kākano began adopting the New Zealand national standard E4E curriculum, initially through the vehicle of the Young Enterprise Scheme (YES). Uniquely in the New Zealand context, all senior students, from the age of 14 years, participate in YES. Furthermore, the teams have been placed highly in local and regional competitions (Mellalieu and Vause 2012a; Mellalieu and Vause 2012b; Tischler 2012). Several parents have been inspired to establish their own small enterprise based around their specialist indigenous craft skills. E4E was viewed by the school and its community as one vital vehicle for developing students' character and contemporary enterprise skills and broadening students' career horizons. E4E also helped introduce new teaching pedagogies such as project-based learning (Markham 2011).

ISSUE 4: Acquire specialist staff who can harmonise with the school's special character

The school began developing an active induction and professional development programme for its staff which was crucial to maintaining and enhancing its unique *kaupapa* [indigenous teaching and learning approach]. (See Fitzsimons and Smith, 2000; Peters, 2002) Partnership arrangements with Māori language and information technology specialist educators enabled the school to present a broad curriculum on a limited budget. The school has made an absolute commitment to employ only registered teachers in positions of teaching responsibility. The Board of Trustees for the school has been broadened and professionalised beyond its 2011 extended family to include external legal, financial, general business, environmental sustainability, and educational leadership expertise.

ISSUE 5: Develop a portfolio of pedagogies and learning technologies appropriate for guiding students to future success in a post-modern, post-colonial world

In the simplest of terms, Ngā Kākano had implemented a learning and teaching environment that weaves together the strengths of several pedagogical approaches: traditional Western in-class teacher-led; *kaupapa Māori* [approaches informed by indigenous Māori cultural practice such as the

well-known *haka* warrior greeting], and *kaitiakitanga* [environmental guardianship]; contemporary project-based learning (Markham, 2011); mail-based correspondence school using NZ and US curricula; strengths-based talent development (Liesveld and Miller 2005); and, increasingly, information and computing technology-enhanced (ICT) learning. In particular, the New Zealand Curriculum has been used since 2013 in years 9 - 13 (pupils aged 13 - 18 years). The result emerged as a productive and distinctive *Te Kaupapa Ngā Kākano*, a case exemplifying strongly the ambitions sought for Māori education by the NZ Ministry of Education's Māori education strategy, *Ka Hikitia* [Literally: Stand up! Metaphorically: Accelerate Success!] (Anon, The Māori education strategy).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Boven, Harland and Grace observed that students who have limited access to 'elite' education are at risk of joining a vicious circle of low educational outcomes, inadequate training for the emerging workplace, and exhibiting behaviours that make escape from poverty difficult. They characterised this state as an 'education divide'. This case study explored the lessons learned from a relatively small and disadvantaged school, Ngā Kākano, that embarked on a path to engage its students in 'Education for Enterprise' as one component of a curriculum to help its students aspire and achieve educational outcomes that better positioned its students for modern citizenship, tertiary education, or other promising career pathways.

Embedding Education for Enterprise (E4E) into the curriculum and broader fabric of Ngā Kākano has been one of several initiatives pursued successfully since 2011. One cannot claim that implementing E4E at Ngā Kākano - or any other school - will necessarily overcome youth disadvantage or the 'education divide'. Nevertheless, the E4E initiative has contributed towards enhancing the school's distinct and highly engaging educational environment. Furthermore, adoption of the E4E initiative was associated with senior students examining a broader range of post-secondary career and educational options, though not necessarily in business. Consequently, it is useful to reflect on the factors we regard as crucial for achieving the successful implementation of E4E in the context

of this relatively disadvantaged school.

First, the engagement of *whānau* [extended family] and their consensus approval at a meeting [*hui*] to implement E4E was a critical, early milestone. Presenting a video record of a successful pilot demonstration of E4E in practice with students of the school was helpful in developing understanding for what was, for parents, an unexpected and novel proposal. Following the consensus decision - by parents, senior pupils, and teachers - to proceed with E4E, the pupils' excitement and level of engagement in E4E was so high that they spent their Christmas (New Zealand summer) holidays thinking of possible ventures. This was a second early 'win' in the successful implementation of E4E in Ngā Kākano. As with *whānau* engagement and approval, pupils' buy-in was equally critical, perhaps more so. This early engagement by the pupils, in advance of the subsequent school year, became amplified in both their success and confidence through the later stages of the Young Enterprise Scheme aspect of the E4E programme. This success created a self-reinforcing, virtuous cycle that continued to pervade the school's adoption of E4E.

Beyond their experience of E4E, graduates of the school enrolled in university studies in a diverse range of subjects beyond business. Younger students are now identifying much earlier in their school studies possible career and tertiary study options, and, therefore, what courses of study and achievement are required during their school years.

At the start of 2015 Ngā Kākano school was growing steadily, optimistically, and surely towards its intended optimal school roll of approximately 130 students. The school roll, then anticipated to be achieved within 18 - 24 months, was aided strongly through extraordinarily well-connected extended family and indigenous community communication networks. Perhaps not coincidentally, it is these types of family and community networks that anthropologist Metge (2015) identifies as being associated with the methods of Maori learning and teaching that flourished in the mid 20th century. Financial resourcing continued to be a challenge, which was expected to limit the school's ability to provide specialist learning support at the most senior student levels - aged 16 and above. Translating the tacit nature of *Te Kaupapa Ngā Kākano* [the Ngā Kākano education enterprise

model] into an explicit formal 'Western-like'/conventional pedagogy suitable for comprehension or adoption by others emerged as a requirement for extending the level of state funding through the Partnership Schools initiative. Growth beyond the perceived optimal roll of 130 students was expected to eventuate through dividing, 'cloning', franchising, or re-seeding *Te Kaupapa Ngā Kākano* into other geographic locations for which there was urgent and evident demand, both within and beyond New Zealand.

In conclusion, one delightful symbol of Ngā Kākano's success was the recent report of an anxious woman who wished to ensure a place on the school's roll for her child - as yet to be born. The community recognised the value of, and is endorsing Ngā Kākano's achievements.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Identify alternative initiatives that Ngā Kākano could pursue over the period 2015 - 2016 that resolve each of the five strategic issues as they existed in late 2014.
2. What other significant strategic issues are pertinent to the development of Ngā Kākano? How would you resolve those issues?
3. What specific steps would you recommend for managing the growth of Ngā Kākano beyond its optimal size and 'cloning' the Ngā Kākano education enterprise model [*Te Kaupapa Ngā Kākano*]?
4. In light of your answers to questions 1 - 3, what specific actions and priorities do you advocate to the Board of Trustees and management of Ngā Kākano? How would you mitigate any risks you identify in your recommendations?

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