

## Ngā wero Challenges

Our MAG has directed our attention to two central wero:

1

To enable all ākonga (students, learners) to experience rich opportunities to learn through a curriculum that recognises their identity and culture, local context, agency, and potential and that builds on what matters to each of them, and what matters to their communities.

2

To provide a way for ākonga, kaiako (teachers), parents, whānau, school leaders, boards of trustees, and the Ministry of Education to recognise and respond to tangible progress in learning that matters for all ākonga in bicultural New Zealand.

## Pātaitai Questions

And we have identified some underlying questions that need to be answered at the system level:

- How might the National Curriculum work together with other influences to guide curriculum decision making at the local level so that every ākonga gets the important learning they are entitled to?
- How can we ensure every kaiako (teacher), school and kura has access to scaffolds and supports that let them put diversity, difference, and equity at the heart of how they design rich opportunities to learn within an environment that fosters well-being?
- How far can we go towards addressing challenges and wero through additional supports and guidance? Is there an opportunity to reduce 'clutter' by clarifying the direction in the National Curriculum documents, learning from what is already working well in each document and from Te Whāriki?
- How might we facilitate and encourage the development of policies and practices that enable all ākonga to learn in an environment that reflects their identity and is truly bicultural?
- How could we shift from reporting to parents and whānau as a twice-yearly 'compliance' activity to ongoing information sharing with ākonga, parents, and whānau, recognising that this is a critical component of educationally powerful partnerships for learning?
- How can we enable parents, whānau, iwi, and the wider community to partner with schools and kura in the design and delivery of rich curriculum? How can we do this while recognising their diverse contexts and perspectives and avoiding the inequities to which these can contribute?
- We know that addressing equity requires us to acknowledge and address privilege. How can the education system create the conditions for equitable outcomes in a world where each child's 'out-of-school curriculum' (informal and formal learning at home and in everyday life) is impacted by whānau circumstances, including around health, housing, and social support?
- How do we ensure that every kaiako, leader, school, and kura has access to appropriate support and scaffolding for their needs? And how do we avoid constraining those with the capacity and capability to design their own approaches and drive innovation in curriculum, teaching, and learning?
- How do we design a system in which improvement is driven by the ideas and practices of the kaiako and leaders working at the leading edge of innovation in teaching and learning?
- How can we get to a point where there are no 'time lags' in the system between what evaluations and feedback are telling us and what is available to support teaching and learning for different ākonga? In particular, how do we achieve this for those in Māori medium education, and those with disability and learning supports needs including complex and interrelated needs?

## Ngā mātāpono – Principles to guide our work

We believe our responses to the wero above will be effective, if they:

**Respect** the potential of all ākonga and demonstrate a commitment to the overall well-being of each ākonga. Offer learning pathways that build on ākonga interests, promote their agency, and enable them to achieve the important knowledge and capabilities outlined in our National Curriculum.

Engender a sense of **ownership** across all stakeholders; that is, they are designed "for the people, by the people".

Ensure ākonga, kaiako, parents and whānau, school leaders, and the Ministry have the progress and achievement information they need to **do their jobs well**. Design and implement feedback loops that ensure people **across the system** can contribute to and benefit from each other's knowledge and insights.

Ensure **balance** between i) coherence and **entitlement**: what all learners are entitled to learn under the National Curriculum; and ii) **flexibility**: the autonomy and conditions necessary to enable schools and kura to design high-quality local curriculum, that is relevant for their particular learners.

Maintain **coherence** across the system and support coherence within, and synergies across, the national curricula for early learning and schools: Te Whāriki (including Te Whāriki a te Kōhanga Reo); the New Zealand Curriculum; and Te Marautanga o Aotearoa.

Acknowledge the **status** and quality of **kaiako** and honour kaiako as professionals who respond to their particular ākonga. Support kaiako to be learning designers. Create greater efficiency for kaiako, principals, and boards and for the system as a whole.

Acknowledge our **bicultural** national foundation based on **Te Tiriti o Waitangi**, hei tūāpapa o Aotearoa. Acknowledge cultural and linguistic diversity so that every ākonga is secure in their identity. Develop cultural and responsive pedagogy to enable Māori to achieve success as Māori.

Support an **inclusive** education approach that strives for equitable educational outcomes. Encourage collaborations across diverse perspectives to support authentic learning partnerships with ākonga, parents, whānau, iwi, and communities through power sharing. Recognise that each community has its own definition of success.

# Imagine a system that is committed to learning...

Our central premise is that if we are to create a system in which all ākonga experience rich opportunities to learn, we need to create a system that learns. We have identified some ideas that we believe are integral to the creation of a system that learns. The diagram and explanation in this section introduces these ideas and explains how they are connected.

The diagram uses the metaphor of a koru as a way of suggesting important concepts about learning, including the way learning unfurls as we grow and develop and how the creation of space lets in light and encourages us to broaden our thinking. The koru is a distinctly New Zealand metaphor and one that reflects te ao Māori. It symbolises creation and movement, yet is firmly rooted in our whenua.

The diagram also includes nodes that represent the many people involved in a system that learns. The connecting lines convey the ideas, experiences, and insights that flow between people as they work and learn together to support our aspirations for ākonga. The pohutakawa roots in the purple layer of the diagram reinforce the idea of a system that learns, by drawing on strong networks, from the past, for learning now and in the future.



To create a **system that learns**, we need...

...to recognise that a learning system is inherently relational. It requires **people** across the system to work together, each with an unremitting **focus on ākonga**. Progress and achievement are fostered by strong **partnerships between kaiako and whānau** and strong **collaborative inquiry networks** across the system.

The ideas in the pink circles are about relationships for learning.

...opportunities for people to develop their **inquiry and evaluation** capability. These capabilities, supported by **assessment and data literacy**, enable people to notice, recognise, and respond to learning as they work together to enrich the **learning opportunities** for all ākonga.

The ideas in the orange circle are about capabilities for a system that learns.

...to ensure there is clarity about **curriculum aspirations** at both the national and local level. Clarifying **progress pathways** across important domains of learning, and creating **rich records of learning** will ensure we can notice, recognise and respond to ākonga progress in ways that promote equity and enable national and local curricula to **evolve**, be **responsive**, and **improve**.

The ideas in the blue circle are about the clarity, coherence and realisation of curricula aspirations for all ākonga.

## Commit to a system that learns

Commit to an inclusive, bicultural education system where ākonga are at the centre, the National Curriculum underpins learning, and all those with a concern and interest in ākonga learning (including kaiako, parents, whānau, boards of trustees, iwi, the Ministry of Education and other organisations and agencies) contribute to and benefit from each other's knowledge and insights. In a system that learns, well-designed feedback loops create an interactive process through which people across the system can learn from and with each other, and all stakeholders engage with this feedback and use it to improve their support for ākonga learning.

## Clarify pathways for ākonga progress

Develop and trial descriptions that re-conceptualise important domains of learning across *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* and *The New Zealand Curriculum*. These domains would bring together valued student qualities, characteristics, dispositions, key competencies, and disciplinary knowledge. They would clearly outline key aspects of progression in each domain, building on the learning outcomes described in *Te Whāriki*.

## Design a process for evolving national curriculum in Māori and English

Design and implement a process for regular review of *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* and *The New Zealand Curriculum*. This will ensure that our national curriculum can evolve over time in response to new learning about needs, opportunities, and priorities.

## Support the design of responsive local curriculum

Develop tools and resources that schools, kura, and Kāhui Ako can use in conjunction with rich descriptions of progress to design and review their marau-ā-kura or local curriculum in collaboration with their students, parents, whānau, iwi, and wider community. This will enable ākonga to learn with and contribute to their communities in real contexts that are responsive to local values, local questions, and local priorities.

## Design and trial rich records of student learning

Design and trial ākonga-owned records of learning that:

- ▷ capture rich learning
- ▷ support ākonga transitions across the schooling system
- ▷ evaluate and communicate progress in important learning across the breadth of *The New Zealand Curriculum* and *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa*.



## Strengthen collaborative inquiry networks

Strengthen networks across both English and Māori medium settings to leverage expertise in ways that grow capability to support progress for all ākonga. These networks would bring diverse expertise to bear on specific problems of practice, so that what's learned in one part of the network can be quickly spread to and tested in other contexts. The networks would serve the aspirations set out in national curriculum documents and in iwi education plans.

## Grow learning partnerships with parents and whānau

Grow and spread effective practices for ongoing information sharing between kaiako, ākonga, parents, and whānau, recognising that parents have diverse needs and a range of effective communication methods is essential for building educationally powerful partnerships for learning. Consider creating flexibility by removing the requirement for reporting to parents in writing twice per year.

## Build assessment, inquiry, and evaluative capability

Build capabilities to gather, analyse and use assessment information to support progress and achievement in critical learning in *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* and *The New Zealand Curriculum*. Grow and develop the aromatawai and assessment tools, processes and literacy that are integral to inquiry and evaluation. Provide support and an accreditation process to ensure that there are a sufficient number of data-literate teachers in every school and/or Kāhui Ako.

## Establish an Institute of Curriculum, Pedagogy and Assessment

Our Advisory Group also proposes that an Institute of Curriculum, Pedagogy and Assessment is established to grow curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and aromatawai knowledge across the system.

### Conversation starter questions

1. What do you wonder about as you read this idea for the first time?
2. Is this idea similar to something that is already happening in your school or kura or somewhere else? If yes, what could we learn from that?
3. What process could work to develop this idea further? What would it take to implement it?