



Oamaru Pacific Education Conversation: Findings Summary

Talofa lava, Malo e lelei, Kia orana, Talofa ni, Fakaalofa lahi atu, Ni sa bula vinaka, Kia ora.

We want to express our gratitude to everyone who shared their ideas and opinions at our Oamaru Fono.

We know that to build a system that responds to the unique identities, languages and cultures of our Pacific communities we must continue to work together. We will be returning to communities later in 2019 to share our response and to continue the conversation.

Wellbeing

We often think about wellbeing in terms of safety, with children knowing they are safe at home and at school. This contributes to a sense of belonging and confidence.

"If you're not feeling safe while learning, you are uncomfortable and won't want to be in that environment. That is both physically and mentally."



Importance of Identity, Language & Culture

A strong cultural identity contributes positively to wellbeing.

"As Pasifika students we acknowledge our culture as an important theme in our life, like nothing matters more than our culture. It is who we are. So we find our culture important so if our learning had something to do with culture, our learning would become important to us."

We want more Pacific teachers and want to up-skill non-Pacific teachers to be more culturally competent.

"I would like my teacher to treat everyone equally, not treat the island kids like they're dumb."

We have a growing Pacific population but we don't necessarily have the options to support identity, language and culture in education. Schools need support with this.

"Cultural wealth can help bring young people back from bad places."

Community needs

We have a strong desire for more resourcing for Pacific specific education and support, for examples Pacific languages and Pacific Counsellors.

"Oamaru - significant increase in Pacific student population, employment opportunities and housing, schools need support connecting with Pacific communities, especially supporting Pacific languages and culture."

Our young people often move away from Oamaru to Christchurch or Dunedin – we want to know how we can we create opportunities for young people to stay in Oamaru.

The role of families & communities

We have a strong focus on the family and the home as the first school, followed by school and church.

Some of us see a role for community hubs run by the community, supported by Ministry of Education.

"I work with youth trying to deal with their parents' generation who are stuck in their own point of view about why they came to Oamaru i.e. for work. But it is hard to get them to look up and our for the next generation's needs."

PowerUP has been helpful in supporting parents to know how to support their children.

"Find out more about your child's education. How they do at school, subject strength, guidelines to direct or redirect young ones of what learning opportunities suits them."

Important knowledge & skills

We want to have more engaging learning- we want to learn new things and to learn in contexts that are relevant to us.

"It's important for us to support what's happening for Maori because it will dovetail into Pacific Island benefits too. And it's important for us to know about other cultures."

We want to have a strong cultural identity, including language skills and values, and be fluent in English.

We want to learn problem solving and listening skills. We want our children and young people to have confidence in themselves with strong values.

"Where there is enough of a Pacific Island population, language should be offered in curriculum - need funding for this."

Keeping up to date with Pacific communities and education

We want to make sure that all of you who participated in the meetings, or who are interested in what ethnic communities have said, are kept up to date.

For more information about the ethnic communities conversation, go to <https://conversation.education.govt.nz/conversations/pacific-education/>