

**Kōrero**

**Mātauranga**

**Me kōrero tātou**

## Online Survey

# The voices of Māori

We asked people to tell us, via an online survey, what was important to them in building a more robust education system. These are the thoughts of 2122 Māori.

We asked four questions to get people thinking about the future of education:

**1** If you were the boss of education in New Zealand, what would you do first?

**2** What does a successful student of the future look like to you?

**3** What will they need to know and be able to do?

**4** What things need to be in place to make sure every learner is successful?

## Survey themes:

Out of the responses we received, we grouped the report into the following four themes:

**Learning – environments:** incorporates feedback around cultural, teaching and learning elements, as well as physical environments and wellbeing.

**Learning – relevance:** includes feedback about skills, innovation, discovery, creativity, competencies, knowledge, values and the concept of lifelong learning.

**Learning – opportunities:** covers resourcing, equity, access to education, educational pathways and learning support.

**Learning – connections:** encompasses parents, family, whānau, employers, communities and the concept of shared ownership.



**Have your say about the future of education**



# What you told us

**Māori comprised 2122 (or 12 per cent) of the 16,466 people who responded to the survey. This summary, and the full report, reflect what Māori told us about building the world's best education system. We commissioned Global Research to analyse these responses. This is our summary of their findings.**

**The full report is available here:**

<https://conversation.education.govt.nz/conversations/education-conversation/what-you-told-us/>

The online surveys are just one part of the **Kōrero Mātauranga | Education Conversation**. During 2018, more than 43,000 New Zealanders, including educators, parents, children and young people, Māori, Pacific communities, people with disabilities and those needing learning support, told us what they wanted in their future education system.

New Zealanders want all our learners to be successful, confident, life-long learners, and to have the skills to fully participate in their families, their whānau and their communities. They also want all our learners to make a positive contribution to society and the economy.

New Zealanders also told us that, in any new education system, the cultural identity and wellbeing of every learner should be central to their educational progress and success. And that parents, whānau and communities want to be more active participants in the education of our children and young people.

The listening we have done so far has already brought changes to learning support. You can find out more here: <https://www.education.govt.nz/quick-links/special-education/>

*Where we have used verbatim quotes, we have left them unedited, except where we have made minor grammatical changes or shortened them to highlight key parts. We felt that leaving them as they were originally written was a more authentic reflection of the person who responded to the survey.*



## Join the conversation





## Learning – environments

- » Knowledge and pride in one’s culture, sense of self and whakapapa are considered key contributors to success in education and life in general.
- » A greater representation of Māori culture was widely sought, as was more respect for the indigenous culture of New Zealand.
- » Compulsory te reo Māori, Tikanga Māori and New Zealand history was identified as being of equal importance as English and maths. Support for traditional academic subjects was also prevalent.
- » Māori sought flexible and holistic teaching practices catering to all learning styles, rather than “one size fits all”.
- » Schools were expected to not only provide students with strong foundational knowledge, but also foster skills in social interaction and mental and physical wellbeing.
- » Competent, qualified and supported teachers were valued, especially those who are engaging, passionate, culturally responsive and love to teach.
- » Māori called for more support for teachers. Suggestions included increased funding, fair pay, reduced workloads, more teacher aides and reduced student/teacher ratios.
- » There is a need for more professional development and compulsory education for teachers in te reo Māori and Tikanga Māori so Māori values can be brought to the classroom. Calls were made for better teacher training and professional development, more teachers who can speak te reo Māori and who use culturally responsive teaching and learning practices.
- » Māori believed that teachers should be highly valued for the critical role they play as educators, and that this would encourage more graduates into the profession.

**“I want school to be a really safe place for everyone... especially people who have disabilities... and even bullies because some bullies might not feel safe and that’s the reason they bully other children.”**

Māori student, secondary

**“...I got bullied and the teachers never helped me. They just said ‘Well don’t go near them or play near them.’ They said that over and over again. When that happen i felt like no one in the school cared and no one wanted to help me.”**

Māori student, primary

### What you told us

**“Ahakoa Māori mai Pākehā mai ko te reo te kanohi o te ahurea o te iwi. Ko te ahurea te manawa o ngā uara o te iwi. Ko ngā uara te mauri me te mana motuhake o te iwi.”**

Māori grandparent

**“They will be WELL – this requires intentionally cultivating and enhancing the mana, mauri, tapu of the children, this cannot be done in a system that perpetuates racism.”**

Maori teacher

- » Effective and supportive learning environments were favoured. Feeling supported and having a sense of belonging in education was considered critical to students' wellbeing.
- » Student wellbeing was cited as a priority and there were frequent calls for 'safe' environments and a no tolerance approach to bullying.
- » There are calls for learning environments to include outdoor spaces to support engagement and success, and for students to learn about sustainability and respect the land and the people living on it.
- » Students should have the freedom to make use of learning styles and learning environments that support individual needs and foster a sense of engagement and passion for learning.

**“ This is where it all begins, right in ECE and their whanau... Let's turn over a new leaf and get it right at the start... ”**

Māori parent, tertiary

**“ Solutions to solve institutional racism in the NZ education sector need to begin with healthy dialogue about race.”**

Māori student, tertiary

**“ We have a wealth of knowledge all around us that is not being well shared or passed on to future generations due to the inflexibility of teacher registration requirements. Teaching is about imparting wisdom and knowledge, and it is as more a gift one possesses than a skill learnt from books. We don't celebrate or encourage that gift enough and we fail to unlock the extraordinarily talents and generosity of spirit that exist within our communities.”**

Māori employer

## What you told us

**“ Staff who understand the learner on a more personal level are teachers that students will remember for life... because the students feel more comfortable with that specific teacher and allow them to teach them.”**

Māori student, tertiary

**“ Take measures to ensure that ALL schools are doing more than just the bare minimum to teach Te Reo me ona Tikanga Māori. And not just basic Reo or tokenism either. A whole respect for the tangata whenua of our country... Māori are the indigenous people of Aotearoa/NZ and deserve to be recognised as such.”**

Māori teacher

## Learning – relevance

- » Māori believed numeracy and literacy skills are critical in life and students should also participate in a range of other subjects to build a diverse knowledge base and a curriculum that's tailored to reflect real world experiences. Additional subjects to support that included practical vocational learning, technology and life skills, along with knowledge of Māori history, culture, and te reo Māori.
- » There was a desire for there to be more mental health awareness, resources and knowledge of how to seek help, plus calls for more support for this in schools.
- » Resilience, self-belief, adaptability and independence, as well as open-mindedness, empathy and kindness were considered key attributes of students. Favoured skills were communication, problem solving, creativity and collaboration.
- » Good career advice is seen as necessary for students to be successful. The cost of continuing education was seen as too high.
- » Enjoyment is important for engagement and a fostering of life-long learning.

**“Preparing students for an evolving job market rather than one career which may become obsolete.”**

Māori student, secondary

**“Mental health and well-being needs to be taught specifically more in school to combat the anxiety and depression we are facing.”**

Māori teacher

**“That learning is about making progress and that it is a journey. That learning is about making mistakes and falling into pits and the finding ways to get out.”**

Māori teacher, early childhood

**“Without literacy and numeracy the rest is insufficient to enable a person to take their place in a functioning society.”**

Māori grandparent

## What you told us

**“Ara ake, he mea nui hoki te tamaiti i tōna whakapapa, ngā kōrero o mua kia kitea e ia i a ia anō i roto i ngā kōrero.”**

**E rite ana te tamaiti ki te rākau. Ko te tipu o te rākau e hāngai ana ki te kaha o āna pakiaka i raro i a ia. Ki te ngoikore ngā pakiaka o te rākau ka whakakonukatia e te rākau, erangi, ka āta whāngaihia te rākau e te wai Māori, e te aroha, e te manaaki ā, kāore e kore ka tipu pai ai taua rākau, ka tū whakahīhi a ia!”**

Māori grandparent

**“... care of self and care of the world around us, I would love to see reflected in the school curriculum.”**

Māori parent, primary

## Learning – opportunities

- » Māori called for a more equitable system for all regardless of socio-economic circumstances, learning needs or cultural backgrounds. They noted the current disparity in outcomes for Māori students and other ethnic groups.
- » Respondents want an education system that acknowledges and celebrates diversity. Difference to be embedded within the system rather than being an occasional inclusion.
- » Academic outcomes and a strong sense of self-identity and culture were considered markers of a successful student.
- » Equitable access to education was valued by Māori, which included access to basic living needs such as food and warm homes and access to high-quality education options and resources.
- » Māori teachers want more options for at-risk students outside the mainstream system as well as individualised programmes for students with additional learning needs, such as mental health.
- » Māori sought increases in support services to cater to students' individual needs, including those that are gifted, have a disability or require learning support. Support in the form of pastoral care was encouraged, including the provision of nurses, doctors, councillors and social workers in schools.

**“Trust teachers to do their job – they're amazing. Uplift them, work with the media to lift the profile of all the great teachers and the great learning there is going on – stop saying education is broken – the education system is broken with its sole focus on statistics, but what happens in everyday classrooms is amazing.”**

Māori parent, primary

### What you told us

**“Ka tuku putea ki nga kura kia kaua nga whanau e utu I nga pukapuka nga utu ki te takaro rehita hakinakina me te ahei kia haere ki nga haerenga katoa he putea awhina ranei kia heke te utu ma nga matua.”**

Māori teacher

**“As humans we accept that we are all different, however our current education system assuming that we all learn the same way.”**

Māori student, tertiary

- » Better opportunities for all students to achieve in post-school education, including reduced cost and debt.
- » Requests were made for free education or reduced cost, reducing class sizes and lower student to teacher ratio (ensuring students had equitable opportunity for the best educational outcomes) and funding for school and classroom facilities and infrastructure.
- » An education system that facilitates a smooth transition from school to further education or employment.
- » Parents and sector workers made comments on improvements to school governance through effective and strong leadership and support of staff, as well as cultural support.
- » More funding of early childhood education to improve educational foundations.
- » Māori felt the early learning years are critical for the development of learning, language and behaviour and should be adequately supported.
- » Māori want more done to address bullying in schools and early learning spaces.
- » Bias, racism and low expectations of Māori and Pacific children from teachers and schools was an issue for parents and students.

**“The classes need to be small enough that teachers have the time to work with individual children.”**

Māori teacher

## What you told us

**“Resilient, adaptable, creative, independent, empathetic, supported to follow their individual pathway – whatever that looks like. Any additional needs they have are supported so they do not have barriers to success.”**

Māori student, tertiary

**“Everyone must get the same opportunities at a state school... money or socio-economic status should not impact on the choices or experiences or equipment children receive in a state-funded school.”**

Māori parent, early childhood



## Learning – connections

- » Strong whānau and community support was encouraged. Māori noted the importance of families engaging with the learning process and working closely with schools to ensure students are supported throughout their educational journeys.
- » Māori say that a stable whānau and family environment and supportive network is important for student wellbeing. Education does not stop and start at the school gate. It needs to be supported at home.
- » A collaborative approach to education, with parents seeking more involvement in their children's education.
- » Better connections between the Ministry of Education and educators. Regular communication and collaboration was encouraged between the Ministry, students, teachers, iwi and wider communities.

**“A weak student teacher relationship can contribute to a student giving up.”**

Māori student, secondary

**“Families and whanau that are engaged, whose opinion is sought and valued and used. Not just a survey but kanohi ki te kanohi.”**

Māori student, tertiary

**“Strong real and reciprocal relationships between teachers and students, teachers and whānau and teachers and communities.”**

Māori teacher

### What you told us

**“Me mōhio te tamaiti he mokopuna ia a Ranginui rāua ko Papatūānuku, he whakapapa tōna, heke tonu mai ki ngā whenua nei i taunahatia e ōna tūpuna ka mutu ka toro atu ki te ao hurihuri ki reira kapo ai i ngā rawa o te rākau pākeha hei oranga mōna waihoki mō tōna hapū.”**

Māori parent, secondary



- » Boards of trustees need to be well-trained and competent, more diverse, more culturally aware and more representative of Treaty values.
- » Community involvement and reciprocal relationships between schools and community groups is important. Students need to be involved in (and giving back to) their communities and communities need to support their students.
- » Māori students wanted a close association between family and schools, which is defined as one where families and whānau are engaged and whose opinions are sought and valued.

**“ ... lot of education happens outside of school too, so I think parents need more support in how to be good parents and support education at home. ”**

Māori parent, primary

## What you told us

**“ ... If we do our part right and love them in such a way that they know we've got their back and we care about them being the inherently amazing version of them, then they will do and be perfect, whatever that looks like. ”**

Māori student, tertiary

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