

Kōrero

Mātauranga

Me kōrero tātou

Online Survey

The voices of Pacific people

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 872 people in the Pacific communities.

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.

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.



Have your say about the future of education



What you told us

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 a future education system through an online survey and face-to-face engagement, including through the Pacific education fono. This summary report is based on data gathered from the online survey.

Of 16,466 people responding to the survey, 872 (or 5 per cent) identified as being from Pacific communities. We commissioned Global Research to analyse these responses for us and 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 survey was just one part of the **Kōrero Mātauranga | Education Conversation**. During 2018, Pacific families and communities shared their experiences and ideas at eight Pan Pacific education fono in Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington, Christchurch, Oamaru and Dunedin, as well as a series of smaller ethnic and group specific fono across Auckland. These voices and feedback are also part of Kōrero Mātauranga, and are contributing to our understanding of Pacific learners' and families' experiences in education.

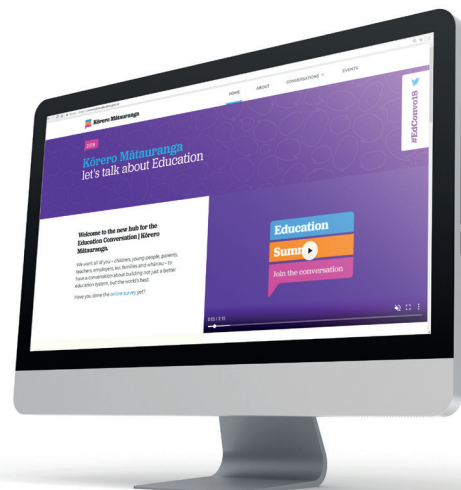
New Zealanders want all our learners to be successful, confident, life-long learners, and to have the skills to fully participate in their families, their whānau and their communities. They also want all our learners to make a positive contribution to society and the economy.

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 report incorporates feedback from the following groups: students (from primary through to tertiary), parents (from early childhood through to tertiary), grandparents, employers, teachers, principals, administrative staff, support staff and board of trustee members.

“ Issues of language Culture and Identity are always tied up with issue of Power and Control by mainstream Pakeha/ Palangi NZ. We are very tired of Pakeha ‘thinking they know best what is good for our children’ End it now... ”

Pacific grandparent



Join the conversation





Learning – environments

“Get the palangi teachers to know who I am and treat me as an achiever.”

Pacific student, primary

- » Teachers need to take the time to get to know Pacific students and their identities, languages and cultures.
- » The cultural values of diverse Pacific people need to be more strongly reflected in the education system.
- » Teachers need to accept that students are on a learning journey and that it is okay not to know everything at once.
- » Pacific people want qualified, competent, engaging and passionate teachers who have students’ best interests at heart.
- » Pacific people want a curriculum that is meaningful, inclusive, child-centred and respectful of Aotearoa’s history, language, culture and peoples.

“If you don’t have a good relationship with your teacher you may not do as well as you can in school.”

Pacific student, primary

- » Pacific learners need to be taught in diverse, supportive, safe, responsive and stimulating learning environments. Inclusive environments that allow all Pacific learners to feel valued, accepted and safe is conducive to learning.
- » Meeting basic needs, such as ensuring all students were well-fed, was considered critical for wellbeing.
- » Pacific learners need to have a sense of belonging at school.
- » Student safety and wellbeing are important to Pacific learners and families, as are measures to eliminate bullying, and racism in the education system.
- » Stress from high workloads was detrimental to Pacific student wellbeing, and there were calls for mental health support services to be provided.

Pacific people wanted:

- » Support for improving the conditions of teachers through increasing salary, improving support, and reducing workloads and student/teacher ratios to ensure more time is spent with students.
- » For teacher training to be reviewed and tertiary training institutions to ensure quality teacher training.
- » Teachers to have opportunities for professional development in cultural competency and assisting learners with disabilities and learning support needs, as well as generally ensuring teaching styles meet modern standards.

What you told us

“I would change the way how different students/teachers are treated by the colour of their skin or what their culture/ethnicity is or what language they speak.”

Pacific student, primary

“Consider and recreate an education system and curriculum that centres on the wellbeing of the infant, toddler, young child, child, adolescent at each age and stage. Not the current factory model that has an intended ‘output’, students as products out the end.”

Pacific parent, early childhood

“In all honesty, teachers are the back bones of the school. Without them a school cannot function well, if at all. They are the professionals yet are treated like a lower class profession.”

Pacific teacher



Learning – relevance

“ We live in a multi-cultural society, but our education system doesn’t recognise that. It’s based on Pakeha values that contradict and/or clash with many different cultures like Pasifika and Māori. ”

Pacific tertiary student

- » Being confident in who you are and where you come from is key to succeeding as a Pacific person.
- » Calls were made for an education system that produces confident, independent, critical thinkers who bring empathy, compassion and teamwork to their learning.
- » Having strong social skills, being able to confidently engage with others and build relationships, were valued and viewed as necessary in the workforce, as well as everyday life.
- » Successful Pacific students of the future were consistently viewed more in terms of their soft skills, but numeracy and literacy skills were highly valued and seen as necessary for functioning and achieving in the ‘real world’.

“ A student who understands the way they learn and who can utilise the strategies to learn, to inquire and to investigate. Once they understand how they learn and see themselves as a successful learner there are no limits to what they can achieve. ”

Pacific parent, primary

- » Knowledge of life skills was considered important, with many suggesting schools should teach students the basic skills needed to live outside of the school environment. Teaching skills that prepare students for entering the workforce was also strongly encouraged. Skills included cooking, cleaning, saving, budgeting, basic maintenance and understanding laws and the tax system.
- » Additional knowledge that enhances the holistic development of a student was supported by Pacific people. This includes promoting student wellbeing through education in physical and mental health; the benefits of exercise; how to manage stress and anxiety; and nutrition.

What you told us

“ In saying that the word success seems to be linked only to academic success. It is a Pakeha defined word and not Pasifika defined. Success for Samoans, Tongans, Cook Islanders, etc, is more than academic success. The successful Pasifika student of the future should: be able to grow up, enjoy life, valued and respected as Pasifika in all aspects of life, i.e. as a Niue, Tokelau, Tongan, Samoan, etc, experience education and success as Pasifika children/people, i.e. Niue, Tokelau – be confident and successful in our languages, cultures, identities, values and beliefs as Pasifika, i.e. Niue, Tokelau - gain the skills, knowledge and understanding as Pasifika to have choices about jobs/ occupations to be able to look after ourselves and our families, participate and contribute confidently as valued members of society. ”

Pacific grandparent



“ A successful student would be a person that thrives to want to add value to our current environment getting a job they desire and has the tools to make informed decisions as 18 year olds. ”

Pacific tertiary student

- » Students were encouraged to be comfortable with themselves; understand their strengths and weaknesses and recognise their cultural identity. This was considered useful in determining appropriate learning and career pathways, as well as fostering a sense of personal wellbeing.
- » Students who are engaged and approach learning with a sense of enjoyment, motivation and passion were viewed favourably. Problem-solving, adaptability and open-mindedness were also valued by Pacific people. Resilience and critical thinking were the attributes that were identified by most respondents as contributing to the success of future students.
- » It was also expected that students should be driven and dedicated to achieving their personal aspirations.
- » There were calls for reduced assessment and measurement and for reviews at school level, to assess what aspects of the system were working and what were not.
- » Pacific employers strongly support students learning digital technology skills as well as effective communication and collaboration skills.

“ Issues of language Culture and Identity are always tied up with issue of Power and Control by mainstream Pakeha/Palangi NZ. We are very tired of Pakeha ‘thinking they know best what is good for our children’ End it now... ”

Pacific grandparent

Learning – opportunities

“ Make sure every student at school is given the same opportunities in education as everybody else. ”

Pacific student, secondary

- » An equitable and inclusive education system was broadly supported by Pacific people.
- » Being able to access a quality education, regardless of ethnicity, gender, or socio-economic status was considered important. Pacific people say that socio-economic, gender, ability, sexual orientation, and cultural or religious background should not be barriers to a good education.
- » Similarly, students having equal access to basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter was viewed as a prerequisite to learning.
- » Where basic needs are not being met at home, they should be provided at school through initiatives such as free healthy breakfasts and lunches, and low-cost or free uniforms.
- » Targeted funding may be necessary to ensure Pacific learners at all schools have access to quality learning resources.

“ Respect diversities of religions, cultures, gender sexualities, classes, castes, nationalities, languages, abilities, socioeconomic statuses. ”

Pacific student, secondary

- » Greater cultural responsiveness is needed. Pacific people noted outcomes may improve for students from other cultures if schools were more responsive to their needs. Places of learning should play a role in facilitating this.
- » Pacific families wanted more choices for bilingual education and more inclusion of Māori and Pacific modes of education.
- » The one-size-fits-all model of the current education system was criticised for not responding to the needs of all learners.
- » Different students have different learning requirements, and schools should account for this through adaptive teaching styles and learning programmes.

“ If we are serious about improving education then we should be serious about improving leadership across the education pathway. ”

Pacific parent, secondary

What you told us

“ Where these student enjoy being taught and mentored by teachers from their own communities. Equity must still be government priority if Māori and Pasifika students including all student are to be successful. ”

Pacific parent, student

“ The fundamental ability to be a good citizen is undermined by the extraordinarily deprived home lives of multiple generations of New Zealanders... This is unacceptable and undermines all advances we are attempting to make – because any improvements for the most successful surely only matter if they can be applied to help the most disadvantaged. ”

Pacific parent, secondary



Learning – connections

“ Be culturally aware and respectful of other people. Also need to be able to contribute to the success of people outside of their particular race or societal groupings.”

Pacific tertiary student

- » Family and community were widely regarded as playing a significant role in student success. Parents should be encouraged to play a part in their children’s learning.
- » Pacific people discussed the importance of family and community being engaged with the learning process and supporting students throughout their educational journey in a reciprocal way.
- » It was noted that students should feel supported, valued, and feel they belong in their family and wider communities.
- » Pacific students of the future will be seen as a success if they contribute positively to their communities.
- » It was expected that, upon completion of their education, students should support their families and be willing to give back and positively contribute to their communities. Pacific voices put emphasis on the student contribution to community as a measure of success.

“ As a Pacific Islander there is a saying that goes ‘It takes a village to raise a child’ – the concept of village in a western world is really not that different it’s just now how we think. ”

Pacific employer

- » It was also suggested that teachers and schools should work closely with families and communities to achieve the best outcomes for students. Respondents say that schools should be more open to consultation and collaboration with parents and whānau.
- » Reciprocal relationships between schools and their communities, and strong partnerships between schools and parents were identified as key factors that increased educational achievement for Pacific learners and contributed to the wider success of the school.

What you told us

“ ...a student is part of kainga/aiga/whānau/families/communities. For Pasifika and Māori, the success of the student is family based. Not individual based. ”

Pacific parent, primary

“ Every learner needs a great support network – understanding whānau, good friends, excellent teachers, mentors, and spiritual leaders.”

Pacific parent, secondary

“ They will need to know where they are going. How they are going to do it. And where they will get help from. Family and friends are a big factor and so is the community. ”

Pacific parent, early childhood



What you told us

“ I would highlight the intrinsic value of Māori and Pasifika Island communities and exalt their strengths for Aotearoa. I would make sure our bicultural history was enshrined and embedded in all aspects of school life. ”

Pacific parent, primary

Kōrero

Mātauranga

Me kōrero tātou

Have your say about the future of education.

Join the conversation at conversation.education.govt.nz



#EdConvo
