



Meaningful ākonga involvement



When ākonga have opportunities to meaningfully engage in all areas of school life they are able to develop future focused skills. We know that one of the most powerful ways to invite engagement in learning experiences is to involve ākonga in learning and curriculum design, yet in many schools in Aotearoa and around the world there is a glaring inequity around who determines the goals of education. To keep ākonga at the centre it makes sense for leaders to consider: *To what extent do, or might, the perspectives of your ākonga inform the design of your local curriculum and school planning and policy?*

Key Ideas | Whakaaro

- Meaningful student involvement requires educators to have strong pastoral, pedagogical and curriculum content knowledge and skills.
- “Education is not an affair of ‘telling’ and being told, but an active and reflective process.” ~John Dewey
- Meaningful student involvement isn’t a student choice ‘free for all’, but rather the deliberate intention of educators and leaders to listen to and act on student voice, ensuring there are built in mechanisms for ongoing student feedback and review.
- Infusing ākonga interests and aspirations into your local curriculum will amplify engagement, leading to improved and valued learning outcomes.
- Empowering students requires 3 things: student voice, student agency and opportunities for leadership.

Key Resources | He Pounamu

1. *Students' views of teaching and learning in ILE spaces* (Tarai Kura, 2022). In this article ākonga from a large urban ILE high school share their views about learning in ILEs. <https://tinyurl.com/akonga-views-ILE-design>
2. *A Day in the Life at OJC*. (Ormiston Junior College, 2020). This blog post outlines how learner agency is factored into the daily timetable ‘The TARDIS’ and the video explains how digital badging enables ākonga agency at this junior high school. <https://tinyurl.com/A-Day-In-The-Life-OJC> and video: <https://tinyurl.com/Digital-Badging-OJC>
3. *Leading change: Learner agency to activate change* (Leaders’ Connect, 2020). This video shares how ākonga at Riccarton High School lead their own learning for change using design thinking. Lisa Heald shares the process. <https://tinyurl.com/Leading-Change-Ideas-to-Action>
4. *Pūtātara - website* (MOE, 2019). This resource supports schools and teachers to develop learning opportunities that are place-based, inquiry-led, and focused on participation for change incorporating sustainability and global citizenship across the curriculum. <https://putatara.education.govt.nz/>
5. *Amplify: Empowering students through voice, agency and leadership* (State of Victoria, 2019). This is a practice guide for schools to grow student voice, agency and leadership. <https://tinyurl.com/Amplify-2019>
6. *Learner agency: Final research report* (CORE, 2017). This resource is the result of both a literature scan and a series of conversations with ākonga and teachers from three New Zealand ILE schools. It provides teachers or learning teams, school leaders, educators and learning communities with a shared understanding of learner agency and provides practical tools for tackling and/or embedding the concept of learner agency within education systems. <https://tinyurl.com/Learner-Agency-CORE>
7. *Student Agency for 2030: OECD Futures Framework* (OECD, 2020). This resource articulates the aspirations for learner agency as a conceptual learning framework. <https://tinyurl.com/OECD-Agency-2030>
8. *10 Ways to Teach Me* (Brigham Riwai-Couch, 2019). Brigham shares his perspective of the top 10 things that make a difference for him as a learner. This video focuses on Māori achieving educational success as Māori, drawing on student voice. <https://tinyurl.com/10-Ways-To-Teach-Me>
9. Home/school/ākonga partnerships in learning and wellbeing: Various learning management systems provide innovative methods for tracking the progress and wellbeing of targeted and all learners. Consider:
 - a) eTAP's Spotlight On Learning© is now available to schools. It's the answer to improving teacher collaboration, increasing student agency, live reporting to caregivers/parents, and collaborative planning. Learn more here. <https://www.etap.co.nz/features.php> (scroll to bottom)
 - b) Hero is a powerful and secure online sharing platform customisable to reflect the curriculum, vision and values of your school. <https://hero.linc-ed.com/>
 - c) School Talk is a cutting-edge cloud platform, which helps schools implement student agency and creates efficiency for teachers, learners and parents. <https://schooltalk.co.nz/>, <https://www.tkh.nz/home> and <https://www.sct.nz/schooltalk/te-kete-hono>