

Tuwharetoa Media Statement

Ngāti Tūwharetoa has always been invested in education and the success that it brings both at home and away. Mātauranga helped to ensure the tribe could defend its pae, its tikanga and mana whenua. Since the arrival of tauīwi however, the ability to be resourceful, tenacious and accommodating has been tried and tested.

Our great grandfather Tamamutu (5 generations ago) gave strategic direction when he said ‘...Whakamārōtia atu anō, ka whakahoki mai ana ki te kapua whakapipi, ka mate kāinga tahi, ka ora kāinga rua!’

‘...Stretch out, but guard your return to the sheltering cloud, a man who has only one plan may not succeed...’

Historically mātauranga and education have been priority areas of development for Ngāti Tūwharetoa, providing a pathway forward for its people. ‘Ka ora kāinga rua’ advocates learning from two houses. One founded on Tūwharetoa knowledge, the other from tauīwi knowledge – each house providing learning opportunities for our whānau and hapū to flourish; so then we, in turn as an iwi, prosper. It is unwise to choose just one house of learning; the kāinga hou (tauīwi), instead the iwi urges the simultaneous full embrace of our kāinga tupu which will ensure learner success in both worlds.

The introduction of colonial education generationally speaking is relatively new by comparison. Although a foreign newcomer, it is this system that has become normalized, capturing the minds of tamariki from ages 6 to 16, not supporting them as Tūwharetoa in their world. Kaumātua and their whānau continue to live with the effects of alienating policies today and the battle to gain cultural knowledge and the language with which to understand it is one being fought across all generations. Therefore placing value on our iwi body of knowledge will ensure it is promoted in the same vein as tauīwi learning opportunities found currently in kāinga hou. To make this happen, the iwi needs a shift of perception, resourcing and investment.

Over the past 80 years, iwi support has been aimed at supporting educational attainment rather than mātauranga attainment. Some hapū have themselves found ways to bring mātauranga Tūwharetoa back to marae and hapū with varying degrees of success with programmes offering marae-based studies and the marae as an environment for trade training. Supporting and re-establishing programmes back on marae and re-connecting schooling communities with hapū is one way forward and largely utilises an untapped resource – hapū and marae learning.

The shift towards greater collaboration across schools/kura/communities/iwi is occurring in response to evidence that shows there are significant disparities in learner achievement in the New Zealand system. Too many learners are not being supported to achieve the outcomes in school that allow them to continue learning and earning in an increasingly knowledge-based economy. Māori learners are disproportionately more likely to be underserved by this system.

It is indeed pleasing to see the Ministry of Education willingness now to respond to improving learner success especially with task-focused projects around working together and improving teacher practice which will benefit student learning as well as a shift to integrate iwi mātauranga into curriculum and pedagogy. All of these will result from the signed Kawenata.

Reconnecting whānau to hapū and ensuring that their knowledge is an important and unique feature of learning within educational institutions throughout our rohe remains a key focus of our work going forward; with the aim of raising achievement and engagement amongst our tamariki and rangatahi. In closing, this Kawenata will provide us with an opportunity to showcase the opportunities that result when learning institutions, teachers and students are engaged with whānau, hapū and iwi. We look forward to this, continuing to work to support whānau, hapū and school engagement through the Kawenata over the next five years and beyond.

There have been five previous Hui Taumata Mātauranga and the changes undergone in the education sector have affirmed Ngāti Tūwharetoa resolve to continue to:

- ④ Develop key relationships with relevant Government Ministries and their agencies that give effect to better educational outcomes for Maori.
- ④ Bring together Māori and Iwi aspirations on the future of education and implement strategies that will achieve these;
- ④ Invest in Māori learners' success, taking advantage of the schooling and tertiary sector leading to employment.

We believe the Hui Taumata Matauranga is still relevant as much today as it was when it was first mooted in 1984. It has the potential to provide a wide range of benefits and outcomes for us as a people and the nation as a whole. Earlier hui taumata have focused on the need to support each other at the local, regional, national and even global level to improve Māori educational achievement. From hearing the voices of our rangatahi, whānau, hapū and iwi and them articulating what they need to be successful, through to exploring ways to unleash Māori potential, it seems there is still much more to be done.

Participants at the next Hui Taumata Mātauranga will have an opportunity to consider:

- ④ What tomorrow's leaders have to say about the current state of education and its responsiveness to Maori/Iwi whānau and their tamariki
- ④ What today's leaders need to be aware of to be effective for our people, now and for our future mokopuna
- ④ What we can do ourselves and what we can expect, to ensure learner success with the support of the Minister of Education and working with the Ministry of Education.

In closing, it is our hope that the Kawenata will take the opportunity to contribute to, and to lend support in providing an educational direction for our people, and in doing so, that we, our whanaunga iwi, the Ministry of Education and ourselves collectively map a sustainable and more effective future for our mokopuna.

“We need to ask ‘How will you support my child as Tūwharetoa’? Are you teaching Te Reo in the classroom? Are you teaching kaupapa Māori in the classroom? What can we do as Tūwharetoa?”

Pakeke, Tūtetawha, June 2013

“We talk about whenua, education. One voice is what we need to have to influence those people to take note of what Tūwharetoa is saying.”

Te Ariki Tumu te Heuheu, Rongomai marae, August 2013