

# Teach First NZ: Ako Mātātupu Report to the Cognition Education Trust Board

March 2018

Support from the Cognition Education Trust enabled Teach First NZ: Ako Mātātupu to trial a Professional Leadership Programme (called the Teach First NZ ‘Fellows’ programme), targeted at experienced teachers and those entering the profession through routes other than Teach First NZ’s flagship programme. Ten teachers engaged with the programme in 2017 and designed and delivered leadership projects in their schools that reflect the kaupapa of our Te Ahowhai curriculum.

The aim of this work was to extend our programmatic approach to a broader range of individuals with the outcome being to increase our impact as a Trust on young people who face educational inequalities, with a focus on young people from low-income backgrounds, a disproportionate number of whom are Māori or Pasifika.

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## 1. Te Ahowhai beyond Teach First NZ: Ako Mātātupu

### **How has Te Ahowhai built capacity so that its benefits have been shared beyond the immediate Teach First NZ community of participants and alumni?**

Teach First NZ: Ako Mātātupu wants to create spaces for more teachers to become increasingly culturally responsive and to build whanaungatanga in order to enhance student learning and engagement in schools and the low-decile communities we serve.

The Fellows Programme was designed to attract, engage and enable current and potential school leaders to engage with the Te Ahowhai curriculum in order to improve their effectiveness with some of New Zealand’s highest priority learners. The aim was to take what we had developed and shown success in with new entrants to the teaching profession, and extend this to others who entered the profession in different ways.



In 2017 Teach First NZ build a new tertiary partnership with the Mind Lab by Unitec to re-design the qualification that our participants complete as part of our programme. The new Masters of Teaching and Education Leadership (MTEL) was approved by NZQA and the Education Council in October 2017, and draws on local and international best practice for employment-based teacher education and leadership development. It is informed by the Te Ahowhai curriculum, and our foci on cultural responsive pedagogy, building 'peer learning networks' as well as the Mind Lab's significant focus on digital technologies and innovative learning methods.

This new qualification has provided the opportunity to the Teach First NZ Trust to develop a new programme for training the in-school mentors of our participants based on the principles of Te Ahowhai, with the scope to be extended beyond teachers engaged with the participants and the programme. This new programme has been heavily informed by what we learned through delivering the Fellows programme, and we believe it has a greater potential for scale because of our automatic connections with these mentors through our flagship programme.

This is explained in more detail below.

## 2. Scoping and Scaling

### **How have you scoped the ability to deliver this initiative to a wider group of New Zealand educators and will you be upscaling the project?**

In the first six months of the project, the Teach First NZ: Ako Mātātupu team undertook considerable scoping by engaging with deputy principals, and mentors, coordinators, participants and alumni of our flagship programme in our host schools (secondary schools in Auckland serving low-income communities) to explore ways in which the Fellows Programme might best serve the needs of their school communities.

These discussions took into account many of the practical aspects of delivering the programme, including the cost to schools, the time commitment required from Fellows and the expectations and perceived added-value of the programme across the two years.

We received very strong support for the potential of the proposed programme and particularly positive feedback about the unique element of culturally responsive pedagogy and leadership.

In early 2017, we wrote to our partner schools to call for expressions of interest in the Fellows programme. It was intended that these new Fellows would be inducted into the new programme in March. Expressions of interest were significantly lower than we had anticipated based upon feedback from schools, but we were able to start the programme in March 2017.

The reasons for this lower than expected response to the programme, based on our further consultation with schools, included:

- Most, if not all schools, have committed their PLD budgets to specific approved PLD providers<sup>1</sup>
- Many lead teachers in partner schools are already enrolled in post-graduate qualifications in digital and collaborative learning, such as that offered by The Mind Lab by Unitec, Manaiaakalani or the University of Auckland, which are accredited and free for teachers in low-decile schools

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<sup>1</sup> The government's policy on professional development for teachers changed in mid-2016 just before we launched the Fellows programme. The new policy means that most schools have committed their full PLD budget for a year to a specific approved PLD provider. Teach First NZ does not have this approval.



Taking account of these changes in context, we refocused the Fellows programme to be a more tailored programme for a cohort of up to 10 teachers.

The revised programme was launched from March 2017 and has included:

- An induction meeting (March 2017)
- One-to-one in-person meetings with each Fellow (up to two hours per term) with a kaihapai from Teach First NZ
- Invitations to attend our Alumni Retreat/ Conference (April 2017) and Mid-Year Intensive (July 2017)
- Support to develop and implement a leadership project with measurable impact on a low decile school community (similar to the leadership project that our participants complete in year 2 of their programme)
- Kanohi ki te kanohi meetings beginning in March 2017 to evaluate the effect of the leadership projects, or to support their upscaling in schools.

While we will not be upscaling the existing Fellows programme, the new Teach First NZ: Ako Mātātupu qualification, the Masters in Teaching and Education Leadership, has presented a new opportunity to engage with teachers outside of our flagship programme, as well as informing the creation of that new qualification.

Most notably, Teach First NZ: Ako Mātātupu has taken responsibility for the training of the In-School Mentors who support our participants. The mentoring element of our flagship programme has been identified as one of its most important components and the relationship between mentor and participant is essential in the development of the latter as an effective teacher.

However, through evaluation of our own programme by NZCER, and other research in both New Zealand and international context, mentoring for beginning teachers has been identified as the least consistent or most variable element in new teachers' induction and early development in the teaching profession. As such, we see the development of our work around supporting and growing mentors as having significant potential to impact not just our own programme participants, but other teachers entering the profession for the first time.

Teach First NZ: Ako Mātātupu is also considering how an initiative similar to the Fellows programme might be developed as a re-training course for overseas trained teachers who need to learn the unique context of Aotearoa's education system before they are appointed to schools. We are scoping how this might be designed and delivered, over what timeframe, and who our potential collaborators might be.

### 3. Research and Evaluation

**How are you sharing the NZCER evaluation of TFNZ with the New Zealand educational community? Have new teachers been included in the research?**

The NZCER evaluation has added a great deal of value to our developing philosophy of teaching and learning and has caused us to consider how to best evaluate the effectiveness of our flagship programme. The evaluation has been shared via our website, networks, and media outlets and we continue to develop research-informed ways to tell our story.

The NZCER evaluation has also informed the kaupapa of the Master of Teaching and Education Leadership developed in collaboration with the Mind Lab by Unitec in 2017. Underpinning this are some of the key beliefs also expressed in Te Ahowhai, that:

- All students are culturally located individuals, are capable of effective learning, and have the right to achieve educational success as defined on their own terms.



- Effective teachers have the potential to effect positive change in the lives of the students in the classroom and beyond.
- Teachers who have “thorough and rich knowledge of the subject they are teaching” (Hagger & McIntyre, 2006) and who have access to a high-quality, school based initial teacher education programme will become highly effective, adaptive experts, contributing to more equitable educational outcomes for all students.

In addition, the NZCER evaluation has influenced the development of our mentoring programme and through this we are continuing to track some of the research emerging from this initial evaluation. We maintain contact with Jenny Whatman, one of the lead researchers, who has facilitated sessions with our current participants, and has also committed to supporting the training of our In-School Mentors.

We are currently scoping the potential for further external evaluations of our work, as well as augmenting our in-house evaluation, data collection and analysis methods in order to more deeply understand the work that we are doing.

## 4. Teacher Effectiveness

**How have you streamlined the delivery of how you develop teacher practice so that they can increase their effectiveness in their classrooms and schools?**

We have taken much of the learning from the Fellows programme to help with the development both of our new qualification as part of our flagship programme, and our new mentoring programme, launched in 2018. In both instances we have been able to streamline the way that we develop teacher practice for instance in the tools that our staff use when working with both participants on our flagship programme and other teachers, including through our mentoring programme.

We have revised our development frameworks for initial teacher education, leadership development, and mentoring, and in each case we have embedded the use of digital technologies to ensure we are able to offer continuously responsive support for these people. And we have changed our staffing model which allows for ongoing engagement with the mentors who are working with our participants in schools.

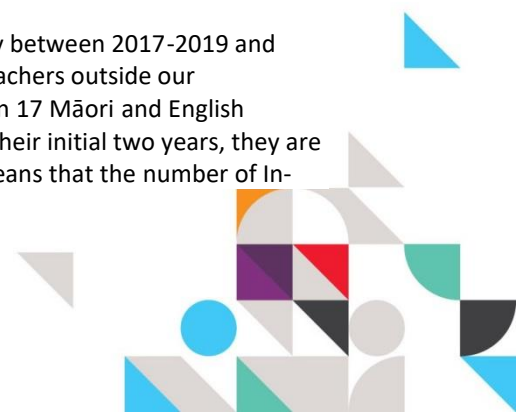
## 5. The networked approach

**How have teachers beyond the immediate Teach First NZ programme accessed the benefits of your work?**

The training of the In-School Mentors who support our participants in schools is the most direct way in which we seek to disseminate the benefits of our work. Through this mentor programme (handbook attached), we intend to foster leaders across and among the communities that we serve. As mentioned above, this programme has the potential to be scaled beyond those teachers directly involved with the programme.

Teach First NZ: Ako Mātātupu is committed to a networked approach and we continue to work alongside many organisations who are likewise committed to ending inequality in Aotearoa. We engage with teachers outside our programme participants regularly. Teachers who access our work include the In-School Mentors, school coordinators, and the many teachers who serve as observers over our Summer School project and as Learning Area Advisors (LAAs) to our participants.

As the number of participants on our flagship programme increases exponentially between 2017-2019 and beyond, so too does the influence of our work in schools and our contact with teachers outside our programme. In 2018, our newest and largest cohort of participants are teaching in 17 Māori and English medium schools in Auckland, Northland, Waikato, and the Bay of Plenty. During their initial two years, they are set to work with circa 8,000 young people from low income backgrounds. This means that the number of In-



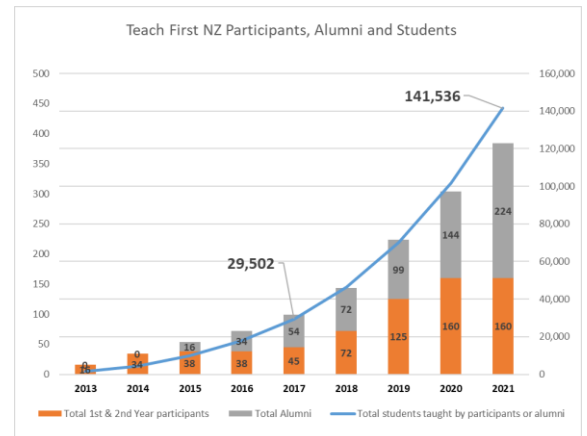
School Mentor teachers has doubled, and with a Ministry of Education impetus to grow to 80 participants in 2019, this will double again in the next year.

## 6. CET's beneficiaries

### How has your project benefited CET's beneficiaries?

Teach First NZ works with CET's beneficiaries through our network of beginning and experienced teachers, and other leaders within the education sector. By the end of 2017, we estimate that our participants and alumni have directly worked with 30,000 young people from low-income backgrounds across Auckland and Northland, and our goal is to have impacted 140,000 children from low-income backgrounds from across the whole of New Zealand by 2021.

Through the Fellows programme we have been able to increase the total beneficiaries we have been able to work with through the experienced teachers, some of whom are also school leaders, who we have worked with. For the 10 teachers who completed the Fellows programme, we estimate that collectively they will be working directly with 1,500 to 2,000 young people in their schools. We expect that completing the Fellows programme, Fellows are more effective as teachers, and are more equipped to lead change within their school, and as such we believe this will improve the educational experience of the young people they work with. Long-term, we expect this change to be measurable in both engagement and achievement in-school, and in the life chances of those young people throughout their lives.



## 7. Project Evaluation

### How have you evaluated if your project has been successful and what have you learned?

The Fellows programme has been successful in developing strong relationships with a small number of teachers outside the programme. The three experienced school leaders who engaged in the Fellowship appreciated the support of Teach First NZ: Ako Matatupu in the development and design of their leadership projects. We are currently engaged in scheduling kanohi kit e kanohi meetings with them to discuss the progress and impact of their projects.

As most of these projects were two year initiatives, we will continue to support them throughout 2018. The trainee teachers who engaged with the fellowship have now completed the mini-leadership projects they implemented and we are gathering feedback from them on how effective these projects were. We will continue to maintain our networks with these Fellows and to support them as needed.

We have learned that due to the Ministry of Education's changes to the PLD requirements for teachers and schools, the introduction of Kahui Ako, and the growing number of available leadership programmes, that schools do not have the resources to commit teachers to a programme like the Teach First NZ: Ako Matatupu Fellows. However, there is a large demand from schools for mentor training.

In 2018, we are using the successful elements of the Fellows programme in our new mentor training programme for the In-School Mentors who work alongside our participants. We hope to develop this programme so that it might reach a greater number of teachers in a wider range of schools. The advantage of this approach is that it draws on existing programmatic elements and connections that we have with in-school mentors to establish, nurture and grow such a programme.

## 8. Moving forward

- In 2018 we plan to scope the potential for Teach First NZ: Ako Mātātupu to become an approved PLD provider, or to work with an approved provider to deliver a similar programme in the future, so that we are able to work with schools with a model similar to the Fellow programme.
- We have implemented a Mentor Training programme (handbook attached) drawing on the learnings of the Fellows programme. This programme is focussed on supporting those working with participants on our flagship programme. We have established this programme in our partner schools in FY 2018, with a view to expanding it to other schools from FY2019. This work is part-funded for schools by the Ministry of Education. We will also consider the potential for accrediting this programme for those who we support.
- In FY 2017 we have developed a new Masters qualification, with our tertiary partner the Mind Lab by Unitec, for our flagship programme. This qualification includes a 'Leadership Project' paper, which draws on the learnings from the Fellows programme, and may be accessible for other teachers beyond our flagship programme from FY 2019.

