IN THE WAITANGI TRIBUNAL

WAI 3310
Wai 762

IN THE MATTER of the **Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975**

AND

IN THE MATTER of the **Education Services and Outcomes Kaupapa Inquiry**

AND a claim by Te Urunga Evelyn Aroha Kereopa on behalf of the Kereopa whānau and members of Te Ihingārangi hapū of Ngāti Maniapoto

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BRIEF OF EVIDENCE OF DIANNE POMARE

Dated 20 December 2024

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MAY IT PLEASE THE TRIBUNAL

INTRODUCTION

1. My name is Dianne Pomare. I am from Te Hikutu hapū in the Hokianga.

2. I was not born into a Māori-speaking home. The Māori language was not available to learn in New Zealand schools in the 1960's when I attended a school in the South Island.

3. I began to learn te reo Māori when I attended Victoria University in the 1970s under Koro Dewes. I was a member of the Te Reo Māori Society and part of the group who presented the Te Reo Māori petition to Parliament.

4. I have a BA and an LLB from Victoria University, a Post Graduate Diploma in Teaching from Auckland Teachers College and a Post Graduate Diploma in Education from Waikato University. I have also completed a few papers towards a master's degree in educational management from Auckland University.

5. From 1987-1989, I taught in a bilingual class in Hokianga. When I moved to Hokianga as a young mother, I was asked to help with teaching at the local Area School as a reliever, even though I did not have a teaching certificate. I also helped at the Kōhanga Reo where our tamariki attended.

6. In 1990 our whānau moved to Auckland so I could complete the one-year post-graduate teaching diploma.

7. In 1992 I started at Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Maungawhau. I was there to support the Kaupapa as there were very few qualified Māori-speaking teachers with the energy to work in a Kura where there were no teaching resources.

8. In 1998, our kura kaupapa moved and changed the name to Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Nga Maungarongo. I finished there at the start of 2024. I worked at the same school for 32 years, starting as a teacher and finishing as the principal there.

9. Over the years, I have observed systemic challenges affecting kura kaupapa Māori, particularly in the areas of teacher recruitment, teaching resources, and infrastructure. While each of these issues presents unique difficulties, the acute shortage of qualified teachers fluent in Te reo Māori and knowledgeable about Te Aho Matua philosophy is the most urgent.

10. My evidence focuses primarily on the teacher recruitment crisis, while briefly addressing other pressing concerns mentioned above that impact the sustainability and success of kura kaupapa Māori.

TEACHER RECRUITMENT CHALLENGES

Teaching philosophy

11. Kura kaupapa Māori have around 65 kura around Aotearoa. Kura kaupapa follow their own teaching philosophy, which underpins the special nature of these kura. Our philosophy is Te Aho Matua.

12. This philosophy requires kura kaupapa Māori teachers to work within the kaupapa, to be role models to their tamariki, which is one of the big differences between our kura and mainstream schools.

13. Te Aho Matua also requires kaiako to be responsive to all the whānau. For kaiako at kura kaupapa, teaching is never limited to just being in the classroom. Being a kaiako at kura kaupapa is a lifestyle choice.

Teacher requirements

14. We need people who can speak Māori fluently enough to teach Māori-speaking Tamariki and be able to teach all required subjects in te reo Māori. This requires knowledge of a whole new body of curriculum-specific terms that have been developed.

15. We require teachers to be highly culturally competent. No tamariki in a kura are going to have their name mispronounced, the wearing of their taonga questioned, their absence for tangi challenged and so on.

16. On top of these, we need people who understand our philosophy and commit to it. We need people with aroha in their hearts, treating tamariki as their own. Teachers need to work much more with whānau to ensure the

principles of Te Aho Matua are being followed. Working in kura kaupapa is a 24/7 commitment.

17. Teachers at kura kaupapa must go above and beyond for our tamariki to ensure they achieve their best and ultimately become a raukura mō te iwi.

18. This is also the reason that Māori immersion schooling system has been shown (in NCEA results each year) that they deliver better results especially in terms of Māori students leaving kura with NCEA level 3.

Teacher pool

Lack of training programmes following Te Aho Matua philosophy

19. When kura kaupapa first began to receive government funding in 1990, some early founders of kura kaupapa, such as Whaea Tuki Nepe, Mere Lodge, and Rawinia Penfold, soon realised that teachers coming from mainstream schools did not necessarily understand Te Aho Matua.

20. Whaea Tuki Nepe began Te Kura Takiura o Ngā Kura kaupapa Māori as a place to train teachers to teach in kura kaupapa. This was successful for a number of years, despite the difficulties of working with Auckland Teachers College as an umbrella organisation.

21. Te Kura Takiura o Ngā kura kaupapa Māori later became a standalone entity. It still exists today, but since whaea Tuki's passing, the programme does not align as closely with kura kaupapa schools, which worsened the te reo teacher shortage situation.

22. Currently, there is only one teacher training programme that trains teachers under the Te Aho Matua philosophy. This programme is offered by Massey University and was set up by our national body, Te Rūnanga.

23. The pool of new graduate teachers is small every year, and many young people are attracted to less onerous occupations where Māori speaking graduates are required and better paid.

24. Teachers who are willing to teach at kura kaupapa with a university degree often do not have the day-to-day knowledge of how to actually teach curriculum subjects such as Pangarau and Pānui/Tuhi. They also have

limited training in classroom and behaviour management in a Te Aho Matua setting. This means they will have to spend a couple of years consolidating their knowledge and may need some support along the way.

Lack of recruitment support and attractive salaries

25. The Ministry of Education is aware that there is a chronic shortage of te reo Māori-speaking teachers, but they have never assisted with recruitment efforts.

26. They have some funds, but usually, there are so many hoops to jump through that it is hardly worth the effort, and the decision to fund or not lies with the manager of the local Ministry of Education.

27. The salary a new teacher with a degree can earn — around $61,000 at kura kaupapa — does not attract people who can earn double amount in the private or state sector.

28. The salary issue also impacts our reliever pool. Many kura kaupapa struggle to find relievers or release teachers. As stated, reliever teachers also need to speak fluent te reo Māori and understand our philosophy and curriculum.

29. In addition, a reliever can only be paid at level 6 of the salary scale, even if they left a previous permanent job at the top of the scale. This is not a great incentive for anyone with long-term experience to work as a reliever.

We are solely responsible for finding solutions to teacher shortages

30. We realised that committed, mature teachers could be found among our parents, and we often used this pathway. Teachers could work at kura as Teacher's Aides and enrol in an online three-year teaching course through Massey University — via Te Rūnanga o Ngā kura Kaupapa, Raukawa, or Awanuiārangi. However, this often involved out-of-hours assignments, weekend hui, and course attendance during the school holidays. It is hard for parents with children to commit to the heavy workload.

31. Other than training parents, many kura use their own graduates as teachers and still use this method as a way of training our own. All kura make use of their recent Wharekura graduates if they are interested in working as Teacher’s Aides. These graduates can then follow the path outlined for

parents. This involves online study to obtain a teaching qualification. Some kura would have 50 percent of their staff as ex-students.

32. Another solution is that we use online teaching methods to meet our students' learning requirements. All kura kaupapa in Aotearoa are constantly looking for teachers, and many have used the internet for teaching subjects in the Wharekura section. This has involved a teacher with skills based at one kura, teaching a class online to various other kura. This has been particularly common for teaching maths.

33. Like many other kura kaupapa, we began to employ extra staff members using what is known as Operational Funding from the Ministry of Education, as opposed to teacher salaries. Our whānau agreed that the money should be used this way, following the whakataukī, He aha te mea nui of tenei ao - he tangata he tangata he tangata (teachers themselves are our greatest asset). However, the funding allocated for teachers means we don't have enough funding for other needs, such as teaching resources, which I will address at the end of my brief of evidence.

34. Kura also look to whānau to help with various teaching subjects, such as Te Taiao, Performing Arts, Hakina Māori. Parents or whānau members can become coaches and tutors in the areas where they have the necessary skills. If they are qualified, they can be employed as a teacher with Limited Authority to Teach (LAT). Kura use many LATs to cover these areas.

35. Even with all these methods being used, there is always going to be a shortage of Māori teachers, and this is an ongoing challenge for us all.

OTHER CHALLENGES KURA KAUPAPA HAVE FACED SINCE THE 1990S

Lack of teaching resources

36. Teachers who teach in Māori-speaking settings need to make resources on teaching topics that are not available in te reo Māori.

37. Mainstream schools have had a database for teachers to search for any resources written on a given teaching topic, like Journal Surf for mainstream schools. However, kura still do not have such a resource.

38. Kaiawhina, such as speech language therapists, social workers, school nurses, all of these did not and still do not have Māori staff fluent in te reo Māori and therefore cannot converse with our young tamariki in kura.

39. We only received Dictionaries for Pangarau, Putaiao, Toi, Te Reo Matatini over the last few years. These were not available for the first 20 years of kura kaupapa.

40. While there has been an increase in supply of teaching resources for Māori speaking tamariki, there have been no reprints of many, meaning that new kura being established cannot get free copies of many of the key resources for maths and reading. For example, Beginning Readers for Māori-speaking tamariki and maths for students in Year 6 and above.

41. We receive the same resourcing rates as mainstream schools, despite doing things differently. The Ministry of Education has never recognised the distinction between kura kaupapa and mainstream schools in terms of providing resources.

42. For example, we require a separate space to teach English as a subject so that it doesn't permeate the rest of the learning environment. The Ministry of Education does not recognise this as a need, even though it is specifically listed in Te Aho Matua.

43. Nor does the Ministry of Education recognise our need for a Whare Hui so that all the whānau can gather for waiata, karakia, and kapa haka. They are concerned with learning spaces in the form of classrooms. Kura need to be very creative in how to get this hui space; usually, it gets labelled as a gym, which is a sign of lack of recognition of tikanga from the Ministry of Education.

Lack of adequate infrastructure

44. Property is a concern for kura kaupapa Māori. The Ministry of Education would build new schools for mainstream education and then give the old buildings, which were not fit for mainstream schools, to new kura kaupapa Māori. A few years ago, Park Estate School in Papakura received an old school building, and only recently moved to a new building that is fit for their needs.

45. All kura kaupapa have started in prefabricated buildings and old marae or community halls. The Ministry of Education does not pre-plan the establishment of kura, even in areas with high concentrations of Māori populations and Kōhanga Reo, with parents wanting their tamariki to learn in kura. They do not have a plan to pre-purchase land for kura, but they do for mainstream schools.

46. Māori students are never prioritised when it comes to proper school buildings. Several kura are currently awaiting new buildings, but the Ministry of Education is funding charter schools, which have not demonstrated how they can improve outcomes for Māori students.

Conclusion

47. In my opinion, kura kaupapa need to follow their own processes for recruiting and training to ensure the graduates understand Te Aho Matua and its principles, which ensure that Whānau are responsible for running the kura. In kura kaupapa, whānau means parents, tamariki, and teachers working together. It is not a top-heavy organisation where a Board of Trustees and Principal tell parents what is going to happen.

48. Ideally, we would like to have our Runanga Teacher Training program recognised as a standalone program, and not as an offshoot of Massey University.

49. In addition to expanding the teacher pool, we would also like to have more funding for our teachers' salaries to attract competent Te reo-speaking Māori teachers.

50. We also need the Ministry of Education to support our recruitment process by providing guidance for principals, similar to mainstream schools, so that the recruitment process can be smooth and efficient.

Dated at **TĀMAKI MAKAURAU** this day of 2024

DIANNE POMARE