

Transforming Leadership¹: A Discussion Paper²
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Introduction:

Foresight and courage are required in undertaking a major ‘rethink’ of the education and schooling sector in respect of Maori in Aotearoa and Aboriginals in Canada. It can be a very difficult task in that it requires everyone to be prepared to critically examine their relationship with the system; it also implies that the ‘system’ itself is prepared to critically undergo examination itself. It is important from my perspective to engage in these processes from a positive and proactive stance – not (as it is so easy to do) from a stand-point of being ‘reactive’, ‘negative’ or from a ‘blame’ oriented perspective. Indigenous educational leadership is an important element to be considered in this process as is educational leadership more generally. I know that this ‘negative’ focused direction is not the intended purpose of the discussions at this Summer School and that there is widespread agreement on the need to look at ways to improve the education and schooling system, indeed re-invigorate it to develop greater access, participation, retention and success for all learners. However, given the high and disproportionate levels of educational underdevelopment that accrues to aboriginal learners, there is need for quite specific and particular attention here.

Who am I and where am I speaking from?

I am a Maori Educator and of the Ngati Porou, Ngati Apa Tribes in Aotearoa/ New Zealand. In coming here to share what I have learned, I am not talking about things that I have not done myself – most of my work is based on practical, first-hand experience. This is an important principle that underpins this talk. I have not come to say this is what you should do, or to ask you to look at the wonderful things that Maori have achieved as a ‘whakahihi’ or ‘showing off’ exercise. The most important thing in my view is to share the point that major change is possible in a relatively short time in terms of indigenous educational underdevelopment and that good indigenous leadership is a vital (but not the only) component. I want to reiterate

¹ The ambiguity of ‘practice’ and ‘praxis’ is intended

² This paper connects with ideas in the following references;

- Sharon A. McDade (Former Director of the ‘ Center for Educational Leadership and Transformation’ George Washington University, U.S. [studied 50 British University Leaders]
- Carolyn Shields (Co-Director of the ‘Center for School Leadership’, U.B.C. [studied Indigenous Leaders in Schools]
- Joann-Archibald – Excellent Schools Study – First Nations Canada
- Michelle Stack et.al (2006) – Review of Education Leadership Programmes in B.C.

that while I intend to also draw on some international examples it is not intended to say this is what should be done here – I would ask you listen and critically evaluate and reflect on what might fit and what might be important in this context and of course disregard the bits that are not relevant.

My position is informed by;

- my experience in the Maori and international arena working with both indigenous and non-indigenous contexts
- first hand knowledge of indigenous marginalization within and as a result of dominant colonial schooling and education systems (noting of course that Canada, Australia, Hawaii, New Zealand and the U.S west coast share Captain Cook and British colonial history which in turn gives some commonalities to the shape of our colonization).
- advocacy for access and success in all forms of education and learning – not just a mono-cultural experience (for most indigenous populations who have been colonized it is often their own cultural reflections that are missing within the schooling and education system)
- Supporting the regeneration of indigenous languages, knowledge and culture as part of formal education processes – but not as an either/or choice up against world knowledge.
- Understanding the leadership elements and responsibilities that are required to solicit ‘buy in’ and support from those whom you are trying to ‘shift’ and as well as understanding the important elements that lead to more effective outcomes for indigenous contexts.

My concern is to ultimately impact and improve the socio-economic positioning of Maori (and other indigenous and aboriginal) communities. I am interested in education because I believe that indigenous peoples can not achieve a sustainable socio-economic revolution without a simultaneous or prior educational revolution – there is an inextricable relationship between the two.

I again re-emphasize the point that education should not be an ‘either / or’ choice with respect to indigenous peoples access to their own cultural knowledge or indeed world knowledge forms. Maori (and indigenous peoples) need both. Certainly Maori, First Nations Canadians, Alaskan Natives, Native Americans, Native Hawaiians (to name a few groups that I have worked extensively with) have often expressed their desire for excellence in their own culture, language and knowledge as well as ‘world knowledge’. I should also point out that Maori (and indigenous) communities are interested in the labour market outcomes that attach to education and credentials as well as the opportunity to recover their own cultural knowledge forms.

A significant part of this commentary is focused on restating explicitly the unfolding and fantastic education and learning journey that Maori are involved in at present.

In this sense it is useful to look to our past to inform the present. In particular I want to refer to what I have labeled elsewhere as the '25 Year Maori Education Revolution'. I reiterate that by such a focus I am not saying '*look at how good Maori are and this is what you should do*' – I simply share aspects of this evolving story in Aotearoa (New Zealand) to illustrate what is possible when the people themselves decide to take decisive action and transform themselves with respect to critically engaging and altering their educational experience. This educational revolution in the New Zealand colonial context occurred when Maori were possibly at their lowest ebb; culturally, socially and economically. Total Maori language loss seemed inevitable that there was a loss of confidence in schooling which was manifested in high levels different problems, e.g. youth gangs, truancy, disobedience and high and disproportionate levels of underachievement. It was also marked by high levels of socio-economic marginalization and indicated by high and disproportionate levels of incarceration, illness, unemployment, poor housing, and income levels. There did not seem to be too much hope – this hopelessness manifested itself within a range of subversive behaviors that worked against the interests of a notion of a 'citizenship settlement'³. Well today of course, there has been a major reversal and turn around. We have moved from this state of despair and despondency to one of optimism about our future and survival as a legitimate and viable cultural entity within our own country. Maori language today is not only surviving – it is slowly growing; there are record levels of participation and success in all parts of the schooling and education system, it is now possible for example to do a complete education through the medium of Maori language – from pre-school to tertiary level; in 2005, one of the Maori Tertiary institutions (Te Wananga o Aotearoa) was the largest institution in New Zealand in terms of enrolments (around 40,000 students); we have exponentially increased our PhD graduates (500 enrolled in five years); we have a Maori television station; A National Maori Research Centre of excellence; Maori parents have much more confidence these days in the potential of education; and tribes now have major educational strategies and planning to develop a 'total learning community/ nation/ tribe approach, and so on.

Let me back-track a little here and give you an insight into the simple beginnings of this education revolution by Maori. It covers the period of 1981 to 2006 and still has momentum today (albeit that this is now leveling out and some of these initiatives are in need of renewal). It may also be a surprise to you to know that this major initiative began to a large extent with the elders. It was at a Maori elder's conference called the Hui Whakatauirā in 1981 where elders came up with the idea of utilizing pre-school language nests⁴ to support the revitalization of Maori language. From this beginning there have been many multipliers or 'new shoots' off the 'seed' of this

³ By citizenship settlement, I mean the acceptance by Maori of a new future in New Zealand which they feel that they are genuinely part. A further element is that Maori are also accepting of non-Maori as being part of the future as well. Another basic condition is that there has been an honouring of the Treaty conditions signed between individual tribes and the Crown (circa 1840).

⁴ This is what is called Te Kohanga Reo (Immersion Maori language pre-schools)

original idea. The following timeline identifies some of the key events in the revolution;

1981 – Hui Whakatauirā and the establishment of Te Kohanga Reo (pre school immersion language nests)

1986 – Kura Kaupapa Maori (Maori immersion elementary Philosophy Schools)

1989 – Kura Kaupapa Maori Tuarua (Maori Immersion Secondary schools)

1980s – Maori Private Training Establishments (Transition to work training centers)

1980s – Wananga (3 – Aotearoa, Raukawa and Awanuiarangi)

1990s – General schooling and Education system embarked on major re-organization to also respond to Maori needs.

2001 – Maori Television

2003 – The Maori Political Party

2005 – Exponential increase in Maori PhD enrollments and completions

As an outcome of these major intervention initiatives, (which were largely initiated, led, managed and governed by Maori people themselves for themselves) Maori are facing the future more confidently. Maori are now much happier (seen in improved participation indices, retention figures, achievement figures in selected subjects within education and schooling). Success seems to be breeding success and definitely Maori are seemingly more willing to engage in the notion of a New Zealand citizenship settlement. While this sounds very good (and it is) I also want to say that there are still a few bumps and some elements that need to improve (so I don't want to overly romanticize the situation) – but generally speaking great strides have been made.

What I would also like to share with you now are some of the key intervention elements that have underpinned this period of positive and proactive change. These change elements are worthwhile identifying and sharing as they may provide some insight or stimulate similar ideas for catalyzing transformation in other indigenous education circumstances. Again, I invite you to critically reflect on these points – some may fit and be immediately relevant and applicable, yet others might need to be recast to fit this specific context, others again may in fact be totally irrelevant. The few points that I share here as merely a selection of a much larger number of key elements which I believe have made the indigenous education and schooling revolution a success in our context. In order to 'lead change' and to support

education transformation of indigenous learners the following strategies are important;

A. There is a need to become more literate about Colonization

There is need to understand colonization more profoundly rather than simply within the traditional understandings of;

- “the schools did it to us”
- “the missionaries and churches did it to us”
- “The state and colonial governments did it to us”.

All of these traditional explanations have elements of truth and are part of the explanation. However there are some people who actually believe that now we understand these elements that colonization can be controlled for or even that colonization gone – over, even disappeared. The term ‘post-colonial’ is often confused as meaning this; it does not mean this – but I think a number of people misinterpret the pre-occupation with post-colonial studies as being ‘after’ the period of colonization. Well, actually no – colonization has not gone away – in many instances it has just changed its form. This is the point – many of us are still looking through the old critical lenses and fail to see the new formations of colonization and subsequently how the new blockages are formed in the face of indigenous aspirations. We need to develop new ‘critical literacies’ which enable us to analyze the various scenarios correctly and to then develop the appropriate response or intervention. As long we continue to miss-read this situation we will continue to produce ill-fitting responses and interventions.

Some of the old forms of colonization have been embedded in schooling and education and we know them by different labels. For example, we should still be aware of the contradictory and colonizing nature of curriculum that is driven by deficit theory and/ or self-esteem theory; we also have critical theory understandings which illuminate the dangers for indigenous cultures contained in the notions of the ‘selected curriculum’ and the ‘social construction of knowledge’. That is, any curriculum is a selection of knowledge by someone or by people with particular interests (c.f. Basil Bernstein 1971 and Michael Young, 1971). Once Maori understood this about the curriculum we could respond more effectively – hence the rise of alternative education and schooling where we could control ‘what was to count as the curriculum’. Examinations and testing are also socially and culturally constructed phenomena that need attention to ensure they are equitably applied.

There are other ‘new’ formations of colonization that arise at the intersection of cultural oppression and economic exploitation. These occur around the commodification of knowledge – the buying and selling of knowledge through manipulating cultural and intellectual property regimes, enacting the regulatory effects of patents, copyrights and trademarks. This is a major issue at present and is one of the key elements of the free trade agreements for example as regulated in the GATT and TRIPs initiatives. The attendant values that allow this kind of exploitation

are contained in the neo-liberal economic values of individualism, privatization, competition, the free-market and so on. Having rendered this critique – I do not want to completely dismiss the potential of neo-liberal economics to also act in positive ways for indigenous interests. (I will revisit this point later).

B. There is a need to centralize the issue of ‘Transformation’

Transformation needs to become our focus in education. Why? Because for the most part the status quo way of doing things has not delivered very significant change of the existing circumstances of high and disproportionate levels of socio – economic marginalization and/or of educational underachievement. We can not simply go on reproducing the same poor outcomes.

The focus on transformation means that we need to know

- How we get transformation?
- What counts as real and meaningful transformation?
- How do we know that transformation is effective and sustainable?
- Whose interests are served by the transformation?

Furthermore, there is a need to theorise transformation in order to make the intervention potential portable and able to be transferred and applied in many sites. Thus I would make the claim that we need to move beyond a linear, instrumental notion of transformation. We need to reconceptualise transformation in multiple sites and using multiple strategies. That is we must move beyond single policy initiatives (as implied in the linear framework) to asserting transformation needing to occur in multiple sites, in multiple ways and often simultaneously. In respect of policy, this may mean the need to focus on ‘whole of government’ strategies involving several ministries engaging with the same issue from different bases at the same time. For example many of the education issues overlap with health, social development, economic development, and so on. We should also be able relate our vision of what we are trying to achieve to the actual process of change and transformation – Jurgen Habermas’s insights (1971) around legitimation – crisis and incremental change are important here – that a vision will usually be achieved incrementally and that we need to understand the incremental nature of change and therefore celebrate the incremental victories along the way to the ultimate vision. That is, don’t just focus on the outcome – also recognize the learning value in the process of transformation itself.

C. There is a need to put Indigenous languages, knowledge’s and cultures at the center of our education revitalization.

This is important in order to harness the emotional energy related to identity and culture in order to enhance learning more generally. Dr. Lee Brown a colleague at

UBC has written some powerful work on this aspect utilizing the Medicine Wheel. The point here is that identity is linked to language, knowledge and culture.

'Place' is also important – land, 'mother – earth'. I am reminded of one of our elders, Rima Edwards and his evidence which he presented in a Land Claim Hearing in the Waitangi Tribunal Hearing – It took him a day and a half of giving the context of 'place' before he actually reached the person who he wanted to talk about in his evidence – his total evidence took two and a half days of traditional stories, chants, songs and oral history). The point is that 'place', our traditional context is important – but it may be that we have to begin the work of finding new concepts of 'place' within our language and oral traditions as climate change and rising oceans threaten many of our traditional homelands. The portentous issue of climate change and its impact in the Pacific must be part of the context in which Pacific Rim Nations plan forward. It is an issue for a forum such as this related to rethinking education.

Some other examples of Indigenous Maori knowledge being important in its own right is exemplified in the work of the Elder Kino Hughes (over 1000 traditional songs sung and recorded; Emily Schuster a Maori weaver who worked on special knots for the NASA Space programme; the Te Maori Art exhibition at the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art – considered artifacts in New Zealand and yet virtually overnight after being displayed in the New York Metropolitan of Art, being considered 'objects of Art' (and subsequently imbued with status and 'economic worth' – the key point here is that knowledge is arbitrary.

In general it took a while to realize both as a people, as an education and schooling system and as a Nation that fundamentally "Maori still want to be Maori"– that Maori were not prepared to sacrifice their culture, language, knowledge or identities and become brown skinned 'Pakeha' (White New Zealanders). Most indigenous peoples I have encountered have the same sentiment – they still want to be indigenous.

D. There is a need to make and lead change 'Ourselves'

A key learning that we have made within our Maori context is that no one else can do the changes for us – we have to do them ourselves. The commitment has to be ours – we have to lead it. Others can help, but ultimately it is indigenous people who have to act. We need to move beyond waiting for a 'cargo plane to land' or for some one else to do it. We need to develop transformative struggle that is inclusive and respectful of everyone. Doing it ourselves should ensure greater 'buy in' from the people for whom the changes are intended. We need to draw on our cultural ways of collective work; of extended family obligation and our values of sharing and reciprocity. In New Zealand we have had to deliberately re-teach much of this as it had been lost to some of our culturally dislocated relatives and the generations who were raised in the urban settings.

'Acting' and 'doing' sometimes requires courage, or it requires someone to just start. This is how Te Wananga Awanuiarangi began (the Maori Tribal University at Whakatane, N.Z.). Literally we started with our imaginations. Once we had decided what we wanted to do the next step was to get a board, four nails and a pot of paint. An empty prefab was found, a name was chosen and written on the board, the board was nailed on the wall and we had started a Maori University. We knew we needed funding, a plan, a CEO, courses, Faculty and other Facilities – but the critical thing was that we started; we nailed our name to the wall and began. Everything else has methodically been built over time, beginning with a strategic plan. Today 17 years later, this tribal University teaches to PhD level, has a wide range of programmes and is a multi-million dollar entity funded by the tribes and the Government. Strategic planning was a very important factor here.

In summary, the points being made here is that in my view there is a need to see the distinction between self-determination (as an outcome) and being self-determining (as a process). That is, the focus of our struggle must be to be actively engaged (self-determining) rather than simply passively engaged with a utopian / rhetorical ideal (self – determination). Being self- determining in my view is to live out self-determination in everyday practice. In this sense, self-determination becomes the vision and the goal; to be self-determining describes the practice of enacting self-determination every moment. In many ways there is a profound question here for indigenous peoples who are already self-governing or who have self – determination and that is – 'is the way in which we live our lives and structures of our society an enactment of self-determination, that is are we being self-determining? The implication of this question is that it is possible to have self-governance and self-determination politically – but to also live our everyday existence in culturally, socially and economically oppressed ways. Many small States may understand these phenomena as 'development dependency' or 'structural indebtedness'. Both of these situations are good examples of what I view as 'new formations' of colonization. For many small self-governing States issues around education development become complicated when confronted with these issues and choices that may put into opposition cultural knowledge excellence and the need to develop skills to enable access to labor markets in order to support economic goals. Often and tragically, the international forces driving economic development seem to have little concern for the issue of localized cultural knowledge excellence, (apart perhaps from a few individuals). It is apparent that many of the International Funding and Development agencies too often have narrow perspectives on these issues (there is lots of literature on this e.g. see Sitiveni Halapua, Malama Meleisia and others) and do not appreciate these ends and often regards them to be impediments to economic outcomes. A subsequent tragedy is that often in these small nations, States and Tribes, the education and schooling opportunities that are offered may end up not delivering excellence in either the cultural or the economic development domain. There are important issues to reflect on here.

Concluding Remarks:

As time is limited - I will move to round off my presentation at this point. I have shared just a very few ideas that derive from different contexts and which may be of use here. I will have lots of other things to share with different groups throughout the course of the Conference over the next week.

I do want to conclude by commenting on the ambiguous notion of *transforming leadership* (I mean both senses in respect of this paper). I first want to list the elements that I think are important in developing transforming leadership capacity that can more effectively impact indigenous and all students;

- a. Self-development must begin with the self. You can not expect others to do things that you yourself have not done or are not prepared to do yourself.
- b. There is a need to interrogate notions of 'individualism' which is inherent in capitalist / market oriented thinking e.g the notion of the possessive individual. Conversely there is need to invest in ideas that mobilize the social capital potential in collective and collaborative activity – this idea connects closely with indigenous cultural thinking.
- c. There is a need to focus on and understand the theory and practice of *Transformation*
- d. Indigenous communities often expect that their concerns for their own language, culture, knowledge (identity) are modeled and accounted for
- e. There is a need to develop critical understandings that are both accurate and insightful in order for the intervention responses to respond appropriately
- f. There is a need to move beyond the pathology and reactionary politics to looking for positive and proactive solutions
- g. There is a need to be alert to the politics of distraction; that is the politics of engagement to the extent that one is distracted from concentrating on the real issues at hand.
- h. There is a need to grow and respond to one's own cultural options as well as engaging responsibly and positively to other cross-cultural opportunities.
- i. There is a need to struggle over education and schooling (and key elements e.g. validity of indigenous knowledge & theorizing) as being potentially a site to realize everyone's aspirations and expectations.
- j. There is a need to be able to articulate (theorize) struggle in terms of subordinated and disaffected cultural groups.
- k. There is a need to focus on & prioritize 'change' / transformation
- l. There is a need to act proactively, positively & inclusively.

Secondly, and before I sign off, I do want to go back to the issue of the potential of the knowledge economy for small scale societies and indeed indigenous communities. I do want to be clear that there are both opportunities and pitfalls in this arena, but indigenous groups need to get involved at this level of thinking. The World Bank, the Asia Development Bank, the OECD and others interested economic structural adjustments in return for their development aid and support is obviously important for small States who are otherwise impeded by local conditions of limited export markets and income streams. A key element that Maori have understood is

the dual potential that resides within neo-liberal economic reform models. I do speak about this issue elsewhere particularly the potential for remote indigenous communities to leverage their indigenous intellectual capability and capacity to leverage wealth creation and work opportunities. Some examples of local indigenous initiatives are to be seen in the Alaska Rural Market-place initiative developed by the Alaskan Federation of Natives, and in the Maori alternative schooling developments (developed within the spaces afforded by the neo-liberal economic reforms of the education sector which argued for the creation of the education and schooling 'market' driven by 'consumer choice' (the Picot Reforms in the late 1980s). Again these elements are not unproblematic but they also afford some opportunities for new developments and approaches.

There is important foundation work that needs to be thought about if a community is preparing itself to benefit from the knowledge society / economy. For example there is a need to monitor and enhance preparedness against some baseline indicators e.g. the following are common indicators used by the OECD to measure comparative performance across countries;

- a. GDP per capita (per capita wealth and income index)
- b. Post Secondary Education Participation and Success (trade and worker capacity and capability)
- c. HDI – Human Development Index (GDP plus social, cultural and environmental capacity)
- d. TAI – Technology and Innovation Index (how well set up is the population with technology access and participation)

The point I am making here is that there is a strong correlation between socio – economic re-development of our indigenous community contexts and improved and successful schooling and educational outcomes. The second important piece that needs to be attached here is that ' improved and successful education and schooling outcomes are inextricably linked to our cultural identities and the survival/ revitalization/ regeneration of our indigenous languages, knowledge's and cultures'. We must try and avoid putting each of these important developments up against each other – it is not an either/or choice – we can do both.

I hope these ideas stimulate some more thinking during this Summer school as you contemplate the future that is rapidly overtaking us. I am looking forward to the upcoming presentations – I am very impressed with the proposed panels and presentations as outlined in the programme. I am pleased to be back in Canada – as always, please forgive my indulgence in bringing the Maori examples to your attention – my motivation is to share what I know that may be relevant and assist your own thinking. Thank you all.

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Glossary of Maori Terms

ako	teach, learn
Aotearoa	New Zealand
hinengaro	mind, intellect
hongi	press noses in greeting
hui	formal Maori meeting
iwi	tribe
kaiako	teacher
karakia	incantation, chant
kaumatua	elder
kaupapa	philosophy; practice
kaupapa Maori	Maori philosophy and practice
kaupapa Pakeha	Non-Maori practice and custom
kohanga reo	lit. ('language nest') pre-school Immersion centres
korero	speak
kuia	elder (woman)
kura	school
kura kaupapa Maori	Kaupapa Maori immersion primary schools
kura tuarua	Kaupapa Maori immersion secondary schools
mana	status, prestige, dignity
manaakitanga	hospitality
manuhiri	visitors
Maoritanga	Maori culture
marae	formal Maori meeting venues
matauranga Maori	traditional Maori knowledge
matua	parent
mihi	greeting
mohiotanga	practical knowledge
mokopuna	grandchild
Ngati Porou	Tribal group, East Coast of the North Island
Pakeha	non-Maori, mainly European New Zealanders
Papatuanuku	Mother Earth
powhiri	ceremony of welcome
rangatiratanga	chieftainship, control
Ranginui	Father Sky
taha Maori	Maori perspective
tangata whenua	literally people of the land, indigenous people
taonga	property
tapu	restricted, sacred
tairā	student, learner

Te Aho Matua	guiding philosophy for Kura Kaupapa Maori
Te Moana Nui A Kiwa	Pacific Ocean
Te Tiriti o Waitangi	The Treaty of Waitangi (1840)
Te Waka a Maui	South Island (the canoe of Maui),
tikanga Maori	Maori protocol and customary practice
tino rangatiratanga	autonomy, self determination
tohunga	expert, facilitator of ritual
tupuna	ancestor
waiata	song
wairua	spirituality
waka	canoe
wananga	institution of higher learning, to study in depth
whaikorero	formal speech
whakahihi	boast; show off
whakama	reserved, retiring, shy
whakapapa	genealogy
whakataukii	proverbial saying
whanau	extended family
whanaunga	relatives
whare	house
whare wananga	house of higher learning
whenua	land