



The Inside View

Tumuaki strategic planning for 2022-24

Ben Lorimer, Beth Talarico, James Beavis



SPRINGBOARDTRUST

Unique insight into principal planning.

Every year, Springboard Trust works with hundreds of Aotearoa principals in our Strategic Leadership for Principals Programme (SLPP) and our Strategic Leadership for Rural Teaching Principals programme (SLRTP), as well as our Alumni Services.

Through these programmes, tumuaki work alongside tūao to expand their leadership capabilities and build a three-year strategic plan for their school.

We believe effective strategic leadership creates positive outcomes for students, and these plans form the blueprint for creating those outcomes.

For the first time, Springboard Trust has collated a full year's worth of strategic plans – some 85 in total – and analysed the values, visions, goals and initiatives across the spectrum of participating principals. The result is an intimate māramatanga / insight into school leaders' plans for the future, key priorities and their strategies for improving student outcomes.

We hope that this insight proves useful whether you are planning for your own kura, researching the education sector or simply interested in what the future holds for education in Aotearoa.

Ngā mihi nui,
Dale Bailey, CEO, Springboard Trust

About Springboard Trust

At Springboard Trust, we Transform Schools Together.

We believe that great leaders make great schools, and focus on tumuaki as the catalyst for positive change in the lives of our tamariki.

We do this through a series of programmes and workshops focused initially on strategic leadership and subsequently on enhancing leadership capability for all leaders and staff in a school. Tumuaki learn alongside tūao/volunteer experts from the public, private and philanthropic sectors – true ako that empowers principals to create lasting change for their students.

Strategic Plans: In Brief

Soon, all schools will have to complete a strategic plan for their school every three years – accompanied by annual reporting to indicate progress or areas of improvement.

Springboard Trust's programmes aim to whakamārama / clarify and simplify the strategic planning process, supporting principals in their leadership, stakeholder engagement, prioritisation and planning for the school.

How principals apply this is up to them – but as the themes show, student outcomes are overwhelmingly the focal point of these plans.

A typical Springboard Trust strategic plan boils down to a one-page document, outlining:

- The school's vision and values
- Up to four primary strategic goals for a three-year period
- Key initiatives to help the school achieve those goals
- Measures to support the plan's implementation
- Key stakeholders in the plan



Overview of Key Themes

Across the 2021 strategic plans, five key themes consistently emerged as focal points for tumuaki:

- Creating a nurturing environment for students
- Connecting with community stakeholders
- Student and staff wellbeing
- Respect
- Growing leaders among staff and students

In these themes we see strong alignment with the guiding principles for the Teaching Council's Educational Leadership Capability Framework (building high trust relationships, collective leadership, strategic thinking and planning in particular).

And while the themes themselves do not directly align with current Professional Learning and Development (PLD) priorities set by the Ministry of Education, tumuaki demonstrated a keen desire to pursue these priorities through specific actions in their plans.

For example, more than one-third explicitly mention local curriculum as a means of creating a nurturing environment for learners, while tangata whenua and iwi were, respectively, significant focal points for respect and community stakeholder engagement.

Overall, tumuaki are focused on their students first and foremost when developing their strategic plans – but with an understanding that to create positive outcomes for the whole child, many levers for change must be worked in tandem.



Creating a Nurturing Environment for Students

Nurturing, growing, empowering – principals see their plans (as well as themselves) as key supports for student outcomes, and across the motu they set goals focused on this nurturing.

The specifics of these goals differed between strategic plans – some prioritised an inclusive environment or focusing on individuals' learning needs, while others established strategic goals around innovation and auahatanga / creativity to foster student growth.

A significant initiative for nurturing students in 2022 will be localised curriculum - local environment, history and identity in particular. Tumuaki are actively seeking out community stakeholders as a resource to support this learning and play a key role in forming local curriculum.

Connecting to Community Stakeholders

In previous research from Springboard Trust, tumuaki have remarked on both the ongeonge / isolation of their role, and the importance of their leadership team and teaching staff working together as a whole to engage the community. This outward focus is a core theme of principals' strategic planning with Springboard Trust – perhaps to be expected given it is an important part of our programme content.

Part of this is an extension of the nurturing theme – tumuaki wish to bring in whānau and community to form the supportive environment for students, as well as help shape localised curriculum. Similarly, tumuaki intend to involve the wider community in their school, be it local iwi, parishes or marae.

This connection also extends between kura, with many aiming to work together to ensure consistent educational pathways for students. Overall, principals understand the important roles that all members of the community have to play in a child's education, and wish to ensure all stakeholders feel valued, respected and welcomed in the school.



Staff and Student Wellbeing



It should come as no surprise that hauora / wellbeing is one of the most prominent themes in these strategic plans. While each school's definition of the concept varies, there is a consistent message of listening to and supporting each individual in the way they require.

This includes student-led learning, relationship-based learning, and creating a positive culture in which students feel safe and well. Again, this correlates strongly to the nurturing environment, and is a theme that principals acknowledge requires hapori whānui / wider community input to achieve.

Teacher wellbeing was another vital focus for principals, with creating a supportive environment and ensuring they are heard both well-represented ideas in principals' strategic planning.

Respect

The vast majority of schools highlight whakautē / respect in a general sense as a focus – normally as one of their school values. Many identify respect for something in particular, with notable examples being the environment, tangata whenua, heritage or cultural differences.

While respect was not prevalent in the schools' strategic goals, its near-universal presence in school values suggests it is foundational to many of the above themes, in particular the inclusive learning environment and stakeholder engagement.

Growing Leaders Among Staff and Students

Principals are steadfast in their belief that distributing leadership amongst their team has a positive flow-on effect for student outcomes.

In their strategic planning, this manifests often as specific PLD areas, notably relationship-based learning, cultural competency (specifically te ao Māori), giving students agency, and catering to individual needs. Teachers were a vital component of this, with staff PLD a prominent initiative among strategic plans.

Other ways of growing leadership in staff involved collaboration on local curriculum, and engagement with the strategic plan (for example, through the delegation of responsibility for key initiatives).

In students, leadership is encouraged through values, supporting them to lead their own learning and promoting opportunities for tamariki to lead their own projects in the school.





A Future Focused on Positive Outcomes

While Springboard Trust's programmes are focused on strategic leadership, the link between this and student outcomes is clear. Through their strategic plans, principals have a clear and explicit focus on goals that improve student outcomes, involve the whole community to support the whole child, and that allow students to flourish as respected, safe and even leading members of their community.

The alignment between these themes and key priorities in the wider education sector are clear, and suggest that the work principals do with Springboard Trust forms the scaffolding upon which they build improved outcomes for students, staff and the wider community.

Thanks to our partners

Strategic partners

AOTEAROA FOUNDATION

ASB



J.N. WILLIAMS
MEMORIAL TRUST

Joyce
Fisher
Charitable
Trust

KPMG

NEXT
FOUNDATION
Investing in our land, our people

NZCER
Rangahau Mātauranga o Aotearoa

perpetual
guardian

THE FLETCHER TRUST

TOI
FOUNDATION

Major partners

AIR NEW ZEALAND

Fletcher
Building



iag

ICF

Spark

Supporting partners

BENDALL AND CANT
Chartered Accountants

FUJIFILM

Russell
McAugh

Sysdoc

WINSBOROUGH